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WOMAN IN TRANSITION

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

A RIBBON OF IRON

IN RUSSIAN TURKESTAN

RUSSIA: TRAVELS AND STUDIES

WOMAN
IN TRANSITION

BY

ANNETTE M. B. MEAKIN

FELLOW OF THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

"Non ego ventosæ Plebis suffragia venor"

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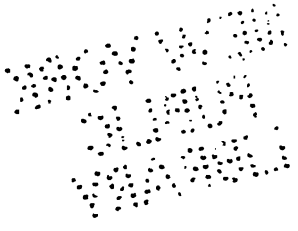

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WOMAN IN TRANSITION

A STUDY

CHAPTER I

GIRLHOOD IN MANY LANDS

TRANSITION and change are synonymous terms. In these days it matters not in which direction we look, social changes meet the eye at every turn, and the greatest change of all is that which is slowly, surely and steadily taking place in woman. The woman movement is one of the greatest problems of our age,[1] and those who travel with their eyes open know that it may be studied in every nook and corner of our globe. This movement has sometimes been mistaken for a revolt, but it is no more a revolt than is the change which a caterpillar goes through before it can become a butterfly.[2] The

[1] "La conscience humaine traverse une dangereuse phase. De nombreux problèmes se posent inévitables: il les faudra résoudre ou périr. Et parmi ces problèmes, celui des sexes apparait incontestiment, comme l'un des plus imperieux et des plus graves." J. Lourbet, "Le Problème des Sexes," 1900.

[2] "When we look at a caterpillar, we like to anticipate the bright day when it will be a butterfly. If we could talk about it with the caterpillar, it would probably be terrified at the idea, and plead the exceeding danger of being high up in the air. We do not desire or endeavour to force or hasten the process, yet the caterpillar becomes a butterfly, without any final objection on its own part." H. Martineau, "Society in America," 1837.

expert can tell, with one look at a caterpillar, what kind of butterfly it is going to turn into. But woman is not a caterpillar and the cleverest of experts are disagreed as to her destiny. Few writers have approached this problem with unbiased mind and complete freedom from prejudice, and it is too closely entwined with the happiness, or unhappiness, of every human being for any to approach it with indifference.

The problem of woman's destiny is as old as our mother Eve. French soil gave birth to the woman movement in its present form; British soil transmitted it to America, and America rightly claims the honour of nursing it to maturity. For many years Germany appears to have escaped its influence, nevertheless it infected her too, and of late opinions have changed with a rapidity that is nothing short of startling. Scandinavia runs Germany very close, but Finland has recently beaten them both, and now, in many respects, Russia is leading the van. Can we point on the map of the world to a country where the relative position of woman is not changing? Who can tell whether at the close of the great race between the nations the first may not be last and the last first? The end is not yet. More than one zealous pioneer has stepped off the right track from very eagerness to help her sex, and has lost her way in the wood. Exhaustive histories and volumes of facts concerning woman have been compiled by enthusiasts, but facts, as Buckle tells us, have outstripped our knowledge and are now encumbering our march; we must remember too that an author may influence us as much by what

he leaves out as by what he says.[1] We often hear the complaint that specialists are seldom inclined to treat the subjects they investigate from a comparative point of view. A fact may become distorted by its mere isolation.

In these days of cosmopolitanism and of facilitated locomotion the outward differences which were once so marked between persons of the same social standing in different countries, and the differences between their customs and way of life generally, are rapidly becoming obliterated. It is no longer in its outer characteristics that the middle class, or *bourgeoisie* of one civilized nation differs greatly from that of another. Let us look at the young girl of the first decade of the twentieth century and note the degree of liberty she enjoys, and the peculiarities of the atmosphere by which she is surrounded. The young girl of the upper middle class in France, especially if she lives in Paris, is impatiently throwing off the restraints that only a few years ago were borne by her sisters with timid submission, and accepted as a matter of course; she has even begun to walk out alone, and to ask herself why she should not be as much the mistress of her own actions as her brother is master of his. It is easy to predict that in her case the *mariage de convenance* is doomed. Here American influence is distinctly traceable, the peculiar influence of the American girl of the type that "hopes to go to Paris when she dies." The bicycle too has

[1] "L'écrivain est surtout puissant par ce qu'il ne dit pas." Voguë. I have observed this to be particularly true in the case of books on Woman.

brought with it many innovations; Frenchmen speak of it as "*le symbole de l'émancipation féminine*," and prophesy gloomily that it will end by abolishing the domesticity of woman.[1] And certainly, as regards their cycling costume, French girls have shown more independence of masculine opinion than their sisters in other civilised countries have dared to do, since the days of Mrs Bloomer. Less change is to be observed among girls in the provincial towns, and of the lower middle class. It is the opinion of an English lady of my acquaintance who has lived for some years in a French provincial town, that the girls there are much better brought up than English girls of the same class, and much more tenderly cared for though their liberty is curtailed. As children, they are never left to the care of servants, but are, except during school hours, always with their mothers, who explain their lessons to them, and are their companions and friends. They do not go to a boarding school, but receive an excellent education at the Lycées, where they are taught among other things how to sew and how to keep house. "Most ladies," says my friend, "occupy themselves with their housekeeping in the morning, dressing very simply, and often, alas, untidily, and then pay calls all the afternoon dressed up to the nines." Little girls are taught from their earliest years to help their mother entertain her friends, and many ladies take their children with them when they pay their calls; consequently French children are never shy and awkward with strangers, but have engaging manners—the natural result of

[1] See Turgeon, "Le Féminisme Français," 1902.

knowing what to do and how to do it. They are also taught to say the right thing at the right time, and are "not self-conscious and dumb as English girls so often are." Their very shyness often makes English children appear rude and repellent — and sometimes even forward. French children are little women, they can manage and arrange things like grown-up people; in fact, there is sometimes a danger of their becoming too precocious. A French mother will not hesitate to interview and engage a teacher for her daughter in the child's presence. An English mother would not think of letting her little girl be in the room while she was trying, in however lady-like a manner, to beat down the teacher's price, to squeeze into the bargain a little more time than was due, or to make her accept a little less than the fair price for her lessons. "One visible result," says my friend, "of the *mariage de convenance* is that young French girls, at least in the provinces, do not angle for husbands as English girls do. They have no need to do it, for their parents undertake to see that they are married; it is, of course, a business affair, though generally the girl's inclinations are consulted." Even when the young couple have not seen much of each other before their marriage, they seem, to outsiders at least, to settle down very well together and to be really happy. When children come they are a tie, and the family is the most sacred institution in France; we see its members cling to one another and find their greatest and tenderest pleasure in each other's society. Perhaps the interests of their family circle are almost too absorbing at times, for certain it

is that the members of an unscattered family are almost invariably narrow-minded in their views, and take very little interest in outside affairs.

If the French girl did not turn out a good business woman it would be surprising, for the atmosphere in which she is brought up is most favourable to the development of any business capacity with which she may happen to be naturally endowed. Her mother is almost invariably a clever manager of business[1] as well as home affairs, and the skill she exhibits often surpasses that of the father or brothers. "Nine times out of ten," says the eye-witness above quoted, "a Frenchwoman will succeed far better than the men of her family in getting over any hitch that may occur in their business." How different from the atmosphere of the average German home, where the mother is still little more than an excellent housekeeper, and the only relief offered from household drudgery is sentimentality or, as an American friend has aptly put it, "vapid vacuity." Bearing this difference in mind we are not astonished at the exaggerated sentiment which pervades the writings of almost every German authoress who has devoted herself to the woman question, or at the brisk, matter-of-fact, business-like way in which the same

[1] "L'esprit d'ordre, l'économie, la vigilance que les Français ont revélés dans le commerce, ont obligé la lègislation à concéder aux marchandes qui exercent le commerce en leur propre nom, une liberté contraire à ses habitudes. 'La femme marchande publique, dit le code Napoléon, peut, sans l'autorisation de son mari, s'obliger pour tout ce qui concerne son negoce, et, au dit cas, elle oblige aussi son mari s'il y a entre eux communauté de biens.'" Art. 220. Dora d'Istria, "Les Femmes par une Femme," 1865.

subject is approached by her French sister. The French woman often makes her husband's business for him. I know of a case where the wife regularly went down to the wharf, checked the merchandise brought by the ship and directed the whole concern. The husband is often little more than a figure-head. Yet, in spite of this, the Frenchman somewhat resembles the German in his attitude towards his women-folk. He fancies they are there solely to minister to his pleasure and comfort. The French husband is to-day his wife's lord and master, but it is very questionable whether he will hold that position to-morrow. The provincial husband still lets his wife go down on her knees and unbutton his boots, or blow up the fire, while he rests leisurely in his armchair and scolds her before everybody. The provincial son is not yet taught to be chivalrous towards his mother and sisters, and he is, it must be confessed, often very rude to strangers. He never thinks of giving up his place to a lady in an omnibus, but pushes her out of his way or blows his smoke in her face. While I was in Berlin I had an opportunity of noting German manners in a tram car. An American lady of my acquaintance vacated her seat in favour of a tired-looking young German woman who entered the car, and a burly man, who had entered at the same moment, pushed past her and took possession of the seat. In answer to the American lady's protestations, he replied calmly, "It's all the same, she is my wife."

The German girl of the middle classes has always

enjoyed a certain amount of personal liberty. As far back as the eighties she could return from a ball in the early hours of the morning without further chaperonage than that of some young man whom she had met at the dance. She might, without the least impropriety even in those days, let herself be seen in the company of a young gentleman in broad daylight provided only that she carried in her hand a tennis racquet or a pair of skates. In the twentieth century the German girl in large towns is almost as free as the English girl, and her years before marriage are no longer devoted exclusively to housework and sentimentality. She is fast losing the insipidity for which she was once so remarkable, and the little leaven of liberated womanhood is quickly leavening the whole loaf, as even its opponents are forced to admit.[1] The German girl's horizon is widening, and she travels much more than she did. Who has not met her in Italy with her kodak? But she rarely travels without an escort. The Finnish girl is a great contrast to the German in this respect, for once out of her teens her parents allow her, if they can only afford it, to travel all over Europe at her own sweet will, in fact the Finnish girl enjoys far greater freedom than has fallen even to the lot of the English girl. A charming and modest young Finnish lady told me in 1905 that, her doctor having advised her to pass the winter of 1904 at a hydropathic establishment in South Germany, to escape the cold winds of Helsingfors, she had travelled thither alone and

[1] "Die Frauenbewegung ist eine durchaus notwendige Erscheinung." Dr J. Müller, "Beruf und Stellung der Frau," 1906.

remained at the "hydro" several months, but that the flutter which the fact of her being alone had caused in the minds of the German ladies there had quite spoiled the pleasure of her stay, and that in future when obliged to travel alone she would take care to choose Norway or Denmark in preference to Germany, for in these countries a young lady could travel where she liked without fear of exciting either adverse criticism or idle curiosity. The daughters of the best families in Finland enjoy all the freedom of which American girls can boast, but the development of their individuality has robbed them of none of their feminine charms, nay, it has heightened them rather, by adding dignity to modesty and strength of character to gentleness. No girl in Finland ever has cause to regret, as I once heard an American girl do, that she was not "born a widow!"

The Swedish girl of the upper-middle class is allowed far less liberty than is her sister in Finland; her characteristics and training resemble those of the German girl, and like the latter she still devotes much of her time to fancy work; she is eager to affect Parisian dress and manners, but she is too Teutonic ever to succeed in passing for a French girl. Her personality and her love of independence are nevertheless strongly marked. Wikmark[1] tells us, with a feeling of pride which he cannot dissemble, that all the facts related by Tacitus about the ancient Germans were equally applicable to the women of the North.

[1] "Die Frauenfrage," Dr Elon Wikmark, 1905.

In Sweden, as in Germany, the young girl who has reached a marriageable age without becoming emancipated, is sent to act as lady-help in the home of some relative or friend in order that she may fit herself for the duties of a married woman. She does not of course receive any salary, as that would be beneath a young lady of her position. Girls of the Swedish *bourgeoisie* who live in the country have hardly heard as yet of the very new woman who is developing so rapidly in Stockholm, and scattering her distorted ideas about the rights of her sex throughout Europe and America.

The personality of the Norwegian girl is far more marked than that of her Swedish sister, and her independence has something almost mannish about it. She will tell you that no one is rich in her country, and everybody must therefore be a bread-winner. Norway is the only country in the world where it is really considered a disgrace for a woman to stay at home and be idle.[1] There was consequently great difficulty in finding ladies willing to act as Maids of Honour to Queen Maud. All who were invited to the Court felt great hesitation about leaving the work they had in hand. The most striking result of this state of things is that Norwegian women have no time to spare for the petty formalities of social life, which have consequently been reduced to a minimum. Ceremonial calls have

[1] It is interesting to hear what an American has recently said on this subject: "An explanation is still needed for the fact that idleness is practically regarded as a vice in men, and a virtue in woman." Lucy M. Salmon, "Domestic Service," 1901.

practically been done away with, for no one has time for them. There is a delightful freedom from stiffness about their social gatherings which we English might well envy. Norwegian girls who visit our country find it difficult to understand why parties are usually so dull and slow in England; one of them remarked to me recently that if a dozen Norwegian girls were put in a room together, every one of them would by her conversation, before an hour was over, have given proof of her independent personality, whereas you might leave a dozen English girls together for a day, and a person who had been present the whole time would find it almost impossible to say afterwards wherein any one of them differed from any of the others in anything but outward appearance. This may be a slight exaggeration, but, if so, it is an exaggeration of an undeniable truth. Work outside her own home comes naturally to every educated Norwegian girl, and many of them leave home very young in order that they may earn their own living. Their education is undertaken with a view to their eventually becoming economic units, and as there is very little class prejudice a girl is not deterred from useful work by the fear of losing caste. As far as its women are concerned, Norway might not inappropriately be termed the "modern Sparta." A king and queen, with a court and its attendant frivolities, would seem at first to be an anomaly in a country that has ceased to have an aristocracy, but as far as the absence of an aristocracy is concerned we have a precedent in Roumania,

whose highest class is merely an upper and lower *bourgeoisie*, which however has no counterpart in Norway, the *haute bourgeoisie* of Roumania shows, in the way that it imitates all that is French, a servility which is utterly foreign to the nature of the Norwegian. The Roumanian models herself on what she conceives to be the highest class in France, but which is in reality the *demi-monde*. She is far more free in her use of rouge and its usual accompaniments than is the French girl of the class she imagines she is imitating. The Roumanian girl is like the provincial French girl, usually over dressed when she goes to pay calls, and very slovenly in the privacy of her own home. She is not allowed to go out alone and is even fetched home from school. It seems hardly fair to compare the Roumanian girl with girls of the nations of which we have been speaking; the moral atmosphere of a Bukarest home is so far beneath theirs; the Roumanians, as a people, are more properly to be regarded as a link between Turkey and the more civilized countries in Europe than as one of the latter; Asiatic tendencies show themselves beneath a thin veneer of Western culture and polish. Let us turn rather to Italy and see how the girl of the upper-middle class is faring there. "The position of the Italian girl is bad," writes a friend who has lived among them for the last six years. "Her horizon is extremely limited, her life is fatally narrow. Her education is in every point inefficient. Her religion is saturated with superstition." The manners of the *haute bourgeoisie* are more or less a copy of those of the aristocracy. In the aristocratic classes a husband

has usually been chosen for a girl before she leaves the schoolroom. In the event of the choice proving unsatisfactory, the girl has absolutely no redress. Her *dot* becomes the property of her husband. Should life with him prove unendurable, and separation become absolutely necessary, she is nevertheless forced to provide for him. There being no divorce, freedom is impossible." The young girl remains a young girl until she marries, no matter what her age, and socially speaking, she may not, until long after youth has fled, even cross the street alone. Italian men who come to England, complain that the girls of this country are "so insipid." Some bright French girls of my acquaintance who have Italian cousins, say that they and their girl companions appear to have absolutely no interest in life beyond getting married. There is no doubt that the Italian girl, like the Spanish girl, is still almost asleep. English girls who have been foolish enough to marry Italians, can tell us how hard it is for a free woman to go into social slavery. Yet there were women professors at the Italian Universities at a time when English women hardly knew how to read! Still in Italy there are signs of reawakening. But what about English girls of this class? Have we not many cases before our eyes to-day, where the family consists of five, six, or seven young girls, all waiting for—a husband? It is true that they have their hockey and golf to shorten the waiting-time, but,—

"'I am aweary and aweary. He cometh not,' she said."

I knew of one family where the daughters divided

all the duties of the household between themselves, and the only duty left for the youngest was that of refilling the sugar basin. Speaking of sugar reminds me of an American girl who once sat opposite me at a continental *table d'hôte*, and who called to her sister who sat lower down the table, "Josephine! urge me down the sugar basin, will you, please," and Josephine "urged" it down. There are in America girls of the same social standing as those we have been discussing, whose one ideal is to be as *English* as possible; they assure me that they never go about alone, and that when they were little they had an English nurse; but even for these girls there are customs in England which they find it hard to understand. "When one of us gets engaged to an Englishman," they say, "his father almost invariably writes to ask what portion the bride is to bring with her! Why, with us a man thinks that the girl of his choice is giving him quite enough when she gives him herself!" I may add here that it is an error to attribute the great fascination that American girls have for Englishmen to their fathers' money-bags. There really exists in the personality of these girls a distinctive charm. I have seen a whole room-full of English people brighten up and become, as it were, electrified into liveliness by the entry into their midst of one American girl. The conversation immediately takes a brighter tone, as if everybody had been suddenly relieved of some secret anxiety. I have heard it said, however, that English girls are much nicer when you meet them abroad than they are in their own homes.

There are still many nice English girls who would rather die in London than live at Margate, and there are clergymen's daughters in the Midlands who would not like to be seen digging the vicarage garden. There are English mothers with insufficient incomes, and talented daughters, but many of their mothers will not let their daughters teach as it might injure their chances of marriage. As for Russia, she had no *haute bourgeoisie* till quite recently, but there too a girl of this class seems to slip down a grade if she begins to earn money. Class prejudice is not marked in Russia, where there is no natural gap between aristocrats and peasants. Where a country is being revolutionised the position of no class can remain stereotyped. The families of the aristocracy, who formerly lived like gentlemen farmers on their vast country estates, are leaving them and settling in Moscow or St Petersburg, and the wives and daughters of noblemen, whose time was once fully occupied with the supervision of their wide domestic interests, are now leading lives similar to those of town-bred women in Western Europe. In Spain a woman of the upper classes may be said never to go out alone, be she maid or wife, except to early mass. In some Spanish towns it is almost a disgrace for a lady to be seen on foot. The education of the Spanish girl is on much the same level as it was in England in the early part of the nineteenth century.

In Switzerland there is a distinct difference between girls brought up in German-Switzerland and those brought up in the French-speaking Cantons. In the former, woman holds the same subordinate social

position as her neighbour in Germany, where man still reigns supreme; in the latter the atmosphere is practically French; but in both a girl has the great advantage of belonging to a nation which is bi-lingual. From her earliest years she has a literature of two countries from which to draw her ideas; she is less bound by class prejudice than most European girls, and in this she approaches nearest to the Norwegian. Whether the strong caste and class feeling which is so much in evidence at the present day will be relegated to history in the days of women's completed transformation is a question that many have tried to answer. All answers are coloured more or less by the particular standpoint of the observer, or the theorist, as the case may be. I have not found a country that is entirely free from class prejudice. Rank there must always be, but the question as to who is entitled to it may be answered more wisely and more justly towards the end of this century than it can be at the beginning.

In Denmark, girls of the class we are now discussing are also changing; they are strongly tempted to break away from old customs, but a fear that tokens of emancipation will lessen their chances of marriage often deters them from following their inclinations. When a girl shows signs of being too intellectually ambitious her companions try to bring her to her senses with this terrible warning: "No one would dance with you if you got a University degree. You will have to sit out all the dances." Denmark is by no means the only country where well-to-do girls are deterred from following their natural bent by fears of

this nature. It has recently become fashionable for Danish girls to take a year at the University, as English girls do at Girton or Newnham, and then return home to the irresponsible if not idle life that still almost universally precedes marriage in this class of society. The reader should bear in mind that throughout this chapter I have been dealing only with the average girl of one particular layer in the social pyramid, the layer that will in all probability be the last to become thoroughly saturated with the ideas that are transforming womanhood, and the reason of this is not far to seek,—a man's rank is in general that of his calling; a woman's rank is still that of her family, and idleness is, in every country except Norway, a badge of social superiority, just as truly as domestic service is a badge of servitude in the eyes of the factory girl.

"As a rule Norwegian girls are not great flirts, they may have many good friends—male friends," writes a Norwegian friend who has travelled a great deal, "but I should not say that they flirt. They are however very free in comparison with girls of other nationalities." The French girl cannot flirt until she is safely married. "Marriage," says a French writer, "gives to a French girl what it takes away from the English girl—her freedom." As for the German girl, she is too sentimental as yet to make a good flirt. Harmless flirtation is a product of English soil and is essentially an English pastime; it is comparatively rare in typical American society, as indeed is the case in all those countries where there is free social intercourse between the young people of both sexes.

Of the gay daughters of Paris, one of their compatriots[1] confesses: "*En attendant qu'on se marie le plus tard possible pour faire une fin honorable, on se livre dans la belle société à un flirt èlourdissant,*" and then goes on to define the word "*flirter.*" "It is," he says, in two words, "*s'offrir sans se donner.*" Strange that those Englishmen who are so ready to condemn every new departure that women are taking to-day as unwomanly, have never a word to say about the unwomanliness of flirting! Do they think, perhaps, that it is the only method by which a true woman can secure the successful fulfilment of her destiny? "Sitting out" on the stairs between the dances is a purely English invention, which has shocked the propriety of more than one foreigner. "You have strange customs in your country," an old German Baron remarked to me in the summer of 1904. "When I and my son were staying at an hotel in one of your country towns last year, we were roused from our slumber about two o'clock in the morning by strange knocks upon our bedroom door, which was on the fourth floor. We did not get up, however, but enquired of the waiter at breakfast as to the cause of the disturbance; whereupon we were informed that the chairs of the ladies and gentlemen who were 'sitting out' at the Tennis Club Dance had accidentally been placed too close to our bedroom door."

I have indicated that the ordinary French girl is not a flirt, but this does not mean that she is not, what in her language is called a *coquette.* She is

[1] Turgeon.

taught, as we have seen, from her earliest years, just as carefully as the Eastern girl, that the art of pleasing is her prerogative, though it is not with her, as with her English and German sisters, the only means to a coveted end. "The art of pleasing is woman's weapon," says a French writer, "it is the condition of her sovereignty, the source of all her strength. To attract and fix the regard of men, to enchain their hearts, is the incessant preoccupation of the feminine sex."[1] It was La Rochefoucault who remarked that a woman could more easily conquer her passion than her coquetry. Yet even Frenchmen are beginning to see that coquetry demoralises a girl, and that a *coquette* does not invariably turn into a good wife, much less into a good mother. A friend who has seen much of English social life in one of our great dependencies writes, "I believe girls tend to be petty, mean and jealous, because they are taught to cultivate their emotions instead of controlling them; their success in life depends upon pleasing men. Until girls learn to respect themselves, and to demand moral qualities in the men who are their friends, their friendships with men will tend to develop the above qualities, which, for my part, I do not think are so natural to women as to men. Out here it is the men who gossip most, and who set the tone of conversation among the women. . . . The characters of girls out here are moulded by the men; whereas the men's characters are moulded by circumstances."

German mothers, although they do not arrange marriages for their daughters, join in the husband-

[1] Turgeon.

hunt with quite as much zest as the girls themselves. A mother and daughter will boldly follow one eligible youth for years together from ball to hydro, and *vice versa*, and the first to propose is almost always accepted—for how can any girl who has been taught that maternity is woman's only destiny, dare to run the risk of losing it? Even if the proposal comes from a man who is *wildfremd* (an absolute stranger), she shuts her eyes and leaps, provided he has the necessary means. But German men are waking up to the absurdity of all this. "It is almost incredible," writes one of them, "how girls who have been brought up with the utmost care and affection, are thrown into the arms of total strangers of whom nothing is known but their social position and their banking account."[1] And another German tells us that the whole *Bedeutung* of feminine existence depends upon a girl's securing the right husband. "All her powers, intellectual and physical, are concentrated upon this great turning point in her life. Our intellect is the slave of our will, and it is only when we are following our inclinations that we are fully on the alert; our interest in an undertaking makes us *klug*."[2] This writer goes on to say that when a girl meets an eligible young man she is like a general marshalling his troops to meet the enemy in the field, or to use another image, she is like troops that have been mobilized; she wears the uniform and stands at her post ready to strike; she now interests herself in matters with which she has no concern; there

[1] Müller. [2] Möbius.

is no subject in which, at such a moment, she will not interest herself. But once her object is gained, the fiery and brillant girl is quickly transformed into a very ordinary and characterless one." And this transformation is, in the eyes of every male German, a simple and beautiful process; an irrevocable law of nature; but it is becoming daily more and more contemptible to the educated German woman, as it has long been to all who really respect womanhood. Yet, so long as marriage is her only *métier*, who will blame a girl for doing with all her might the only serious thing her hand finds to do? Even in England, bridge and golf and hockey and tennis are not serious life-work to a rich society girl, and the great drawback from which she suffers, the drawback which poisons her existence to-day, as it poisoned that of the women of the French *salons*, is the absence of a real object in life.

And wherein is the objectless life of the European society girl so immeasurably superior to that of the daughter of a wealthy Turk? Whatever superiority there is, is fast disappearing. In Egypt and in Constantinople girls of the highest families are beginning to be educated according to European methods, and more and more personal liberty is being granted to them. Without any loss of dignity on their part, suitable husbands are always found for them, for every good Mohammedan can have four legal wives, and Islam knows nothing of the old maid. Educated Mohammedan women, especially Tartar women in Russia, are working bravely for the emancipation of their sex from the slavery

into which Mohammed himself never could have wished them to fall. If Russia's women have made such remarkable progress since they threw aside their veils at the command of Peter the Great, what should hinder the women of Islam from following their example? The Sart women of Central Asia, the most secluded of all women under the sun, are actually beginning to travel, and the year 1903 saw special compartments reserved for them in the Russian carriages on the Transcaspian railway. Now let us look at home. In the year 1904 a wealthy Englishman died in one of the Midland counties. It was found, to the amazement of some of his friends, that he had left his flourishing business and all his money to his sons. The girls, educated solely with a view to marriage, are now earning their daily bread (probably as nursery-governesses), while the sons keep their own carriages. In what other country in the world may a father bring his daughters up in the greatest luxury, and then, if their angling for a husband has not been successful, thus leave them penniless? "*Les mœurs des pays latins*," wrote Dora d'Istria in 1865, "*sont hostiles à ces penchants, mais en Angleterre, une fille elevée dans le bien-être peut se trouver exposée aux plus rudes épreuves.*" I do not believe there is another country in the world where a parallel case to the above could ever occur, yet it is quite usual in Britain. We are above copying the laws of Justinian, and English girls are brought up to be thankful that they are not as other girls are, and to imagine that they are better treated than any other women on earth! Yet no

Mohammedan gentleman would leave his daughters unprovided for. Osman Bey[1] tells us that Mohammed's crime towards woman was one of *lèse-humanité*, and that it consisted in his adding the sanction of religion to that of custom, and thus consecrating by divine law a system contrary to the laws of reason and nature. If the Prophet could only return to his people in these enlightened days, would he not assuredly rectify his mistake? Surely he would see that woman has not found her paradise beneath the sole of her husband's foot, and would help her to find it elsewhere. And St Paul, too, were he permitted to revisit the earth in the twentieth century, would he not take care that in future his words regarding woman should be interpreted in due relation to the time and place in which they were written, and in due relation to the persons for whom they were particularly intended? Everything St Paul said about women would, however, be admirably fitted to the women of Bokhara, were they to be converted to Christianity to-morrow.

[1] "Les Femmes en Turkie," 1878.

CHAPTER II

THE YOUNG WIFE

A GROUP of gaily dressed Japanese ladies came down to the quay when our steamer was leaving Yokohama for Vancouver, and we supposed, as they waved their handkerchiefs to the passengers in one of the boats, that we should have, at least, one Japanese fellow-passenger, but none were visible. The mystery was solved on the third day of the voyage by an American gentleman who, it turned out, had, during a stay of five weeks in the land of the rising sun, secured for himself, besides many other valuable curios, a Japanese wife. He told us frankly that his reason for taking unto himself a bride of that nationality was that he wanted a consort whom he "could command." He knew, he added, that such a treasure was not to be found in America. I heard from the stewardess towards the end of the voyage, that the poor Japanese lady, who was attired as a European, had been a prisoner in her cabin from headache nearly the whole of the way, probably from the weight of her large European hat. "And the bridegroom?" I asked. "Is he very attentive?" "He troubles her very little with his attention," was the reply; and I then told the stewardess how the marriage had come about. She was an American,

and the look of scorn that came over her face I shall never forget. "Oh! indeed! He wanted a wife he could command, did he?" she hissed, and with that she threw back her head and bounced out of my cabin. Since then I have often told the same story to Englishwomen, but to them it does not seem so striking. Of course we all know that the Japanese woman's moral code, like that of the Englishwoman, consists of three obediences; first to her father, later to her husband, and lastly to her son; but every rule has its exceptions in Japan as elsewhere, and it is only too true that, as Dr Talmage once put it, "the goods delivered are often very different from the sample for which the bargain was made"; marriage is always, more or less, "a departure for the unknown with the unknown."

Every German youth feels, as he grows into manhood, says Dr Müller, a yearning to find some woman who will lovingly yield her whole personality to his, in perfect self-effacement. If this is so, the German youth will very soon be compelled, like our American friend, to travel to Japan before he can find the commodity in question, for German women are becoming daily more loath to part with their personality even in marriage. As for Norwegian women, they inaugurated the twentieth century by causing the word "obey" to be gently removed from their marriage service, and there are already men as well as women in Germany who advocate a similar proceeding in that country, yet those very men assert in the same breath, that, under healthy conditions, the wife should always be dependent upon, and sub-

ordinate to, the man she has accepted as her husband. The man, according to them, is the wife's head, and the wife is the man's heart. On the other hand, their women are deciding mildly, but firmly, to keep, even in marriage, the heads with which their Creator has endowed them. The men, in their eagerness to convince the women of their error, have called science to their aid, but their scientists have, alas! for some twenty years or more, been treating the cranium of the female Teuton as a special field of research without making any discovery that could have real weight on either side of the dispute. True, the woman's brain has been found to be relatively the smaller, and to weigh less than the man's, but it is not the relative size or weight of the brain, but the relative quality of the thought, that will have to decide the question; and to discover this, vivisection might have to be resorted to. It is the German too who has called religion to his aid, as we shall see in another chapter. The German still expects his wife to give up her independence of thought as readily as she gives up her name, and with no more sense of loss. But there is one country in Europe where the wife keeps her own name, merely adding that of her husband to it. I allude to Spain.

Every page that has ever been written by a German on the subject of marriage is remarkable for the writer's wearisome repetition of the word *Liebe*, whereas what the German woman really *wants* in these days is *Freundschaft*. She agrees with the advice that Voltaire gave to the Duchess de Richelieu on the day after her wedding:

"Ne vous aimez pas trop, c'est moi qui vous en prie,
C'est le plus sur moyen de vous aimer toujours,
Il vaut mieux être amis tout le temps de la vie,
Que d'être amants pour quelques jours."

"A husband and wife can never be friends," replies the German, "for one of the strands in the rope of friendship is mutual criticism, and it would be against nature for a wife to criticise her husband."[1] Further, the German believes that the masculine sex alone is capable of friendship, but in this view he stands, in the twentieth century, as far as civilized countries are concerned, almost alone, so great are the changes that have taken place in man's conception of the opposite sex. The Frenchman and the Belgian take the change in woman seriously; the German feels an ironical contempt for it, which he only partially succeeds in veiling with sentimental pedantry. In America the average husband is more his wife's obedient and devoted servant than her friend, and the American woman of the moneyed class resembles a spoiled and petted child. I have heard English women complain that American men are effeminate, but perhaps that is only because of the way they part their hair. I do not think myself that there is any likelihood of their being reduced to petticoats. Or, was Cato right when he predicted that as soon as woman had become man's equal she would become his superior? It was Max O'Rell who made the discovery that John Bull[2] had a decided

[1] Dr Müller.

[2] "It has long been noticed in England that the John Bull type of Englishman is disappearing." J. Lionel Taylor, "Aspects of Social Evolution," 1904.

predilection for domineering over his women-folk; and now, in the twentieth century, the British press is at last pointing out this evil; it is urging the married man, often by means of long newspaper and magazine articles, to change his attitude towards the wife of his bosom; some articles, it is true, by the Transatlantic words and phrases which we detect in their composition raise the suspicion that the ideas they embody may have come from America. One favourite periodical tells us that, except on the lowest rungs of the social ladder, the English husband would feel it a humiliation to act openly on his wife's advice on a matter which concerned his business; it urges him seriously, however, to overcome this weakness. A popular monthly magazine strongly advises men to be more communicative towards their wives as to the state of their banking account, instead of expecting them to know and act upon facts which have never been revealed to them. These may be small signs in themselves, but they help to show in which way the wind is blowing. The office of the daily press is rather to reflect than to guide public opinion, and as soon as the sympathy of the public has been gained over to a cause the press comes forth as its champion.

The young wife of the upper-middle class has not, when the honeymoon is over, enough serious occupation to keep her in good health and spirits. She has been educated with a view to securing a suitable husband, but when she has successfully obtained that object, the boredom and *ennui* of which she becomes the victim, especially if children do not

come quickly, is injurious to her health, let alone her spirits, *yet man has never even suggested a remedy.* How often have the woes of such young women been poured into our sympathising ear? The husband, whose brain has been healthfully occupied all day, often comes home at night almost too tired to eat or speak, and naturally on such occasions finds his young wife's demands upon his affection unreasonably exacting. German pedants write whole theses to prove that her overweening demand for affection and sympathy is an unalterable trait in the nature of the female sex; they are like a person who cannot find the name of a place on the map because it is written in letters so much larger than they had expected; they have not advanced one step from the position Byron described when he announced that love was woman's whole existence. What scientists have attributed to unchangeable biological law, is nothing more than the natural transition brought about by purely economical causes. In the days of our great-grandmothers the young wife had enough duties to fulfil in connection with the household to keep her properly and happily occupied. Housekeeping in itself was a much weightier affair then than it is now, and the wife, as well as the husband, had the satisfaction at the close of the day of feeling that she had earned her night's repose; she knew, too, that her labours were indispensable to the welfare of the household, and thus gained self-respect, which expressed itself in her quiet authority and her dignified management of the servants and dependents who looked to her for daily guidance. There

are a few homes still, in Russia, where we can get an idea of the busy, useful, and happy life led by our great-grandmothers. The superintendence of fruit gathering and preserving, of spinning and weaving, of bread-making, and a thousand and one other departments, all fell in former days to the lot of the ladies of the household, no matter how aristocratic their blood might be; and nothing was then written about a wife's exacting demands upon her husband's love; neither did the men complain of their wives' extravagance, or their extraordinary fascination for shops and the pleasures of shopping; the women were not loafers, nor did they belong to the unemployed. We will go much further back. How charming is the picture Homer gives of how Nausicaa and her queenly mother employed their time! But the old days and the old duties are gone for ever, and women of this class are like the rest of their sex, dissatisfied, restless, asking for new outlets for their energy that will take the place of the old ones. They are at last beginning to express what they have felt so keenly and so long in silence—their need of an earnest purpose in life, a purpose suited to the age they live in and to the abilities which education and culture have developed.

It has been objected that even American women seemed perfectly satisfied with their condition in the early days of their country's existence as a nation. And this was quite natural, their time was well filled. The proudest women of the Southern states did not in those days think it beneath their dignity to attend to household matters. In the early years of the

nineteenth century every garment worn by the negro slaves on many a Virginian estate was cut out by the ladies of the family. Married women were more contented in the old days, for they all had a field for the exercise of their powers, and all exercise of our natural abilities gives us not only contentment of mind, but a real pleasure far and away superior to the pleasures of passive enjoyment. German pedants might have learned this truth from Aristotle. An idle, aimless life leads in woman, as in man, to peculiar constitutional disorders. Laycock[1] devoted much study to the complaints of those females who follow sedentary occupations and suffer from repressed feelings in civilized communities. He contended for a special "affectability" in women so placed. He thought that perhaps in *woman* it might be compatible with good health, but felt no doubt that in *man* it was a morbid state (!), the source of hypochondriasis and the result of causes which depress the powers, or excite unequally the nervous system. The fact is, that vacuity of mind, and want of purpose, are just as injurious to a woman as to a man, and lead to a morbid state quite as certainly in the case of the one sex as they do in that of the other. It is also false to attribute the frailties of American society women to all the women of America, no matter whether they be moral or physical. The nervous prostration of which we hear so much is not a result of healthy activity or congenial employment, as the enemies of the woman movement would have

[1] Thomas Laycock, M.D., "A Treatise on the Nervous Diseases of Woman," 1840.

us think. It is, more often than not, the result of lives spent in objectless hustle and bustle, in the search after pleasure and excitement, in the effort to kill time.

When Harriet Martineau visited America as far back as 1834, she found that the longevity of American women was not so great as that of English women, and that "the feeling of vigorous health was almost unknown." In those days the woman movement was in its infancy, and American ladies thought it unwomanly to walk. Some indeed do so still. A young American gentleman told me recently that his mother had always kept her carriage, and that he had never known her walk a hundred yards. All our healthful outdoor sports and pastimes are part and parcel of the changing status of woman; they originated in England and have passed thence to America, just as other changes have come from America to English women. But even in those days the married woman of America had (unless she lived in Massachusetts) one great advantage over her English sister, she had her own property to manage, for America adhered to the old Saxon law that a wife shall possess half, or a large part, of her husband's earnings or makings. In New York the wives of wealthy American business men then, as now, saw nothing of their husbands from early morning till late at night, and had no other employment than to wander from one luxuriously furnished room to another, to water their flowers, read the latest English novel, or "amuse themselves at the milliner's, paying perhaps a hundred dollars for the newest Paris bonnet." In those

days Paris had not begun to attract American society as a loadstone attracts a magnet.

And are not those American women who have been attacked by the travelling mania, and "do" western and southern Europe in a few months, likely to suffer from some kind of prostration on their return home? I was not surprised to hear from one of them how greatly she had been impressed during her stay in Dublin with the wonderful historical interests of Holyrood Castle! A similar mental state is produced in England by over-working for examinations. A bright English girl told me that when "going in for B.A. honours in classics" at the London University, she had given, when asked to describe the public buildings of Athens, a lengthy description of the Coliseum!

Had she but relieved the tension of her mind before the examination by reading Byron, or even Mark Twain, instead of classical text-books, she could hardly have made such a mistake; at anyrate she would have remembered that the victims of the Coliseum were "butchered to make a *Roman* holiday."

But to return to the objectless lives of society women. Have these empty lives no effect on the nation in which they are lived? Yes, it is the society woman who sets the fashion in thought just as truly as it is she who sets the fashion in dress; and not only in thought, for it is she who has the casting vote as to the kind of food society shall take for the nourishment of its thought. There are periods when motors and bridge are the only really fashionable pabulum for mental culture, and then we hear

of publishers going bankrupt, libraries closing, and, worst of all—of authors "violating the public"[1] in order to get readers for their novels, and bread for their children's mouths. Aristotle says, in his "Ethics," that it is commonly held that a man will do what he will bear to hear, but that this must be limited, for a man will not do quite all that he will hear, because jesting is a species of scurrility, and there are some points of scurrility forbidden by law. "It may be," he adds, "that certain points of jesting should have been also so forbidden." Why do novelists of the twentieth century fill their novels with what a Frenchman has designated as "sickly immoralities?" "*La pourriture d'hôpital, qui a disparu de nos hôpitaux, est dans nos livres. Par qui ces livres sont-ils lus? Surtout par les femmes.*"[2] And what women read them? Those who have, in place of an object in life, an idle and morbid curiosity and an ever restless passion for *fresh* sensations. In an eloquent speech on temperance at the close of the nineteenth century Bishop Westcott told his hearers that startling incidents and morbid studies of extravagant situations and persons were characteristic of popular books of the day, and he urged upon them that intemperance of this kind was perilous, that it destroyed the powers of calm thought, that it dulled the apprehension of the quiet joys of the passing day, that it exhausted the quiet worker when he needed refreshment, and last but

[1] This expression was used by Zola in excusing the peculiar characteristics of one of his earlier works.

[2] Lamy.

not *least*, that it grew by indulgence. At whose door then does the blame lie, if not at the door of those who think that it is unfeminine to have an earnest object in life, and who train up their girls to idleness? "Only a general strike among women readers," says Lamy, "will effectually check the stream of immoral books, and when that strike takes place, their output will immediately diminish." "*Car les écrivains ne sont pas sales pour leur plaisir, mais pour notre argent.*"

The proprietors of a well-known library[1] have recently informed the public that there is a growing desire among their members to read every new book the moment it comes out. They tell us, moreover, that they have many readers who change three volumes regularly every day, and are therefore supplied with more than nine hundred volumes in a year, whereas those very readers would, thirty years ago, have been content with three volumes a week for the same money. What readers are these, we may well ask, who have so much time on their hands? And what kind of literature is it that they get through with such lightning speed? They are the women who can afford to be idle, and who have been taught to think that men do not like "learned women." Yet men are everywhere being won over to the woman movement here, as elsewhere; husbands and fathers are waking up to the fact that superficially educated and idle wives and daughters will not cease to get through three

[1] See letter to the *Daily Telegraph* from the proprietors of the Grosvenor Gallery Library, Oct. 12, 1906.

novels a day till they find something better to do.[1] "Until we cultivate, enlighten, and train the literary taste of our women," says a French writer, "we cannot hope to improve the literary taste of the general public"; and "Everything," says another, "which will help to tear women from the emptiness of a worldly life is a blessing for our country and a pledge for its future well-being."[2]

[1] "Détourner les femmes de la littérature légère ou vicieuse qui s'étale dans les livres et les journaux est tout profit pour l'esprit national et la moralité publique, parce qu'en plus de la maternité physique, la femme est appelée à faire œuvre de maternité morale, parce que ses fils selon la chair sont aussi les enfants de son âme et qu'elle leur transmet avec le sang, avec le lait, avec la vie, tous les germes de progrès, l'idee qui éclaire, l'amour qui enflamme et la vertue qui exalte et sanctifie l'humanité." Turgeon.

[2] Madame Edgar Quinet (quoted by Turgeon).

CHAPTER III

THOUGHTS ON MOTHERHOOD

GREAT thinkers of every age have expressed their conviction that love and motherhood are the deepest instincts of a woman's being, and that marriage and the production and rearing of offspring are her only real destiny. How comes it then that woman herself is, in every class of society and in every civilized nation, a vehement opponent of this doctrine? So vehement indeed has her opposition become, and so eloquent her pleading on her own behalf that she is steadily winning the deepest thinkers of the twentieth century over to her side. For years the European public laboured under the erroneous impression that the woman movement was confined entirely to a group of disappointed old maids and discontented masculine women, who threatened to grow beards and adopt male attire. The poet Ibsen did perhaps more than any other man to correct this mistake; his writings have had an almost revolutionary effect on the thought of Scandinavia, Germany and Italy with regard to the sphere and final destiny of woman; to-day those writings are affecting even England, not directly, but through the medium of sociological writers who have imbibed Ibsen's ideas and are giving them to

English readers, each in his own way. Behind Ibsen stood a woman, Camilla Collet.[1] "Ibsen's 'Doll's House' acted like a bomb on everybody," writes a Norwegian friend. "There was no party, no discussion, and no newspaper in those days in which 'Nora's' behaviour was not discussed. The result was that Norwegian women were let loose all at once, so to speak. As for Ibsen himself, he is one of the severest moralists of our times. Always in earnest, he shows us the inevitable consequences of our deeds—and, almost, of our thoughts. He urges upon us the truth that what we sow, that we shall also reap, and that punishment will assuredly follow if we trample our ideals beneath our feet, he teaches us that humanity must be true to its innerself." He is too much in earnest, and too scathing to be popular especially in France, England or America, but he has done his work, he has shown the world that motherhood, even though it be woman's most sacred duty, can never more be looked upon as her final destiny. Martin Luther's opinion of women, that she was created solely for man's convenience and for the multiplication of the species; Canon Knox Little's opinion, that wifehood was her crowning glory,—these and other equally degrading theories have, we trust, been buried with the nineteenth century.

Let us for a moment throw aside the halo with which Englishmen feel it their moral duty to surround the word "motherhood." Every student of the animal world is perfectly aware that maternal

[1] See Ibsen's Correspondence.

love is an animal impulse, which, for the very safety of our morals must, like all other animal instincts and impulses, be kept within its proper bounds. A much-maligned young Austrian author[1] dared to utter this truth when he said that the relatively absolute mother (if such existed), would be ready to become a mother by any man if she thought only of the child. Happily it is not towards absolute motherhood that the noblest teachers of the twentieth century are teaching our girlhood to struggle with might and main. No really womanly woman, in the opinion of one of Ibsen's British adherents, would ever form an attachment, or even know what it means, until she is requested to do so by a man.[2] The self-respecting woman of the twentieth century will find worthier pursuits than that of husband-hunting. Woman is forming for herself a far higher and nobler ideal than man ever hit upon through his own initiative, but happily wherever he is worthy of the name, he is helping her with all his might to realise it. Ibsen set before himself the task of arousing his nation and leading it to think great thoughts — even about woman. If the state of motherhood were in itself so ennobling to woman as the moral hypocrisy of the nineteenth century—especially strong in England and Germany—would have us imagine, how could so sentimental a writer as Michelet speak of "*la maternité exclusive de la jeune femme concentrée tout en un enfant, tres froid souvent pour tout le rest?*"

[1] Weiniger.

[2] G. Bernard Shaw, "The Quintessence of Ibsenism."

Yet all of us know this purely animal form of motherhood. We have met with the young mother who is displeased at the slightest allusion to the charms of some one else's child, who never speaks of a friend's baby except that she may make a comparison flattering to her own, and who appears to labour under the delusion that a headache resulting to a tired husband or to a visitor from the ceaseless rattle of her precious darling, cannot possibly be so painful as headaches resulting from the noise of other people's children.

There are many kinds of motherhood, some of them are immoral, and others are even criminal. The knowledge that an inherited evil is certain to be transmitted to her offspring, if she has any, does not always deter a girl from marriage or from becoming a mother. And sometimes the blame for this is due, rather to the girl's parents than to herself. As long as marriage is the only career open, so long will fond parents be tempted to shut their eyes to consequences, in order that they may secure a home for their daughter. A noble mother of many children has emphasised this to me, as an evil of our age.

Only the other day the Earl of Lytton,[1] addressing a Parents' Conference at Brighton, remarked that with regard to a young man's duty towards women, he believed the common view of this question was, that woman's highest mission was to be a helpmate and a solace to man, and that therefore it was the duty of man to enable woman to carry out this lofty

[1] See report of this address in the *Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 11, 1906.

design. This view was, in his opinion, adopted by both sexes; girls were brought up to become wives, and marriage was the only future their parents contemplated for them, they were merely kept at home until some man could be found who would give them a home of their own. It appears then that the Earl of Lytton would not altogether agree with the French political economist,[1] who has been telling his countrywomen that it is only through the august functions, and the terrible risks of maternity, that woman can ever rise to man's level. A good subject for a future address might be the discoveries that have been made with regard to heredity. It is a significant fact that this subject has, so far, been almost entirely overlooked by male writers on the woman question, and I can recall no female writer who has treated it with the seriousness it merits. It is now known that acquired traits are not transmitted, but instincts (such, for instance, as a craving for alcohol) can be, and are, constantly handed down to posterity.[2] In such cases motherhood may be criminal, as well as in others which will readily occur to any thoughtful mind. In the happy future when higher womanly ideals have spread around us we shall all realise, no matter to which sex we belong, that to hold unqualified motherhood before every girl's eyes as her highest ideal, is to play the traitor to our race and to humanity. But the day is, we hope, approaching when our Empire will conspicuously grapple with the problem of a declining birth-

[1] Turgeon.

[2] See G. Archdall Reid, "The Present Evolution of Man.

rate, and yet demand of woman that she shall strive to realise the fulness and completeness of her individual life, not through these elements of her being by which she is bound to earth, but through those by which she holds fellowship with God.[1]

And what, then, are the causes of the steadily declining birth-rate, not only in France, but in Sweden, in Holland, in Portugal, in Russia, in Germany, in America, and in England? Are we justified in attributing it chiefly to the influence of a certain professor who published some views of his own while he occupied a chair at Haileybury College in the thirties of last century?—a man, by the way, who was even during his lifetime considered to be "the best-abused man of his age." There were men in those days who felt it their sacred duty to tear the reputation of Harriet Martineau to shreds as soon as she began to interpret the views of Malthus to her readers. And now, it is thought that the wind has turned, and that the greatest nations of the earth have become Malthusian in practice as well as in theory. France it was who introduced the two-children system into Europe, and it has been adopted by a large section of American society. There are scores of American society women who drive a regular bargain with their husbands that for every child with which the home is blessed, the mother shall take a year's tour in Europe. Many Transatlantic ladies have been heard to boast that they waited till three children had appeared in order that they might enjoy three years of European travel without having to

[1] See Bishop Westcott, "Lessons in Work."

cross the ocean more than twice. It has often been remarked by competent observers that these American women will be the ruin of their country. What is more probable, however, is that these women will only be the ruin of their own families, for there is ever a supply of fresh, healthy *bourgeoisie* blood ready to step in and fill the gaps left by decayed families of the aristocratic and intellectual classes in every country. But restriction of the size of family is not confined to society women; there are intellectual and high-minded women in America who openly avow that in order that they might have sufficient time to devote to certain philanthropic causes for which workers are exceptionally scarce, their families have been "limited by mutual agreement."[1] A German scientist has been telling the world that by the adoption of the two-children system among its higher classes, a nation must necessarily deteriorate as surely as it must decrease.[2] In confirmation of this opinion he quotes another writer who has enjoyed special facilities for studying the question by a long residence in France, and who has come to the conclusion that the only boy, and the only girl, are, as regards their social quality, decidedly inferior to the children of large families. Only children, we are told, are *Angstkinder*; in their case such ordinary occurrences as measles and whooping-cough are looked upon as calamities. Father and mother are slaves to their child's every humour. To be "Papa's pet," or

[1] See A. Gerhardt und H. Simon, "Mutterschaft und Geistige Arbeit."

[2] Möbius.

"Mama's idol," "My first-born," and "My Benjamin" all at once, is bad for any child.[1]

Most people will probably agree with Dr Möbius that with the children of a large family, self-denial, unselfishness, and a spirit of give-and-take are the very air they breathe. In the large family consideration for others, true comradeship and solidarity are taught with every day that dawns. The children's characters strengthen and sharpen by mutual friction, and what is very useful for after life, a more correct valuation of his or her individual importance is obtained by each child than can possibly be the case where a child is brought up alone. The only son, the only daughter, are almost sure to develop egotistic or domineering qualities. The ideal family should contain children of both sexes, but until a law for the predetermination of sex has been discovered and widely promulgated, co-education would seem the only method of correcting deficiencies in this direction.[2] Those who argue so eloquently in favour of small families appear to overlook the significant fact that the Malthusianism of to-day is not practised in cases where it would obviously eliminate the unfit, or preserve the members of a family from threatening starvation; it is not popular in the pestilential slums of London and Gateshead, or among the aliens who flock from Europe to Chicago; nor is it in favour with the negroes of St Louis. In some circles of American society there is a real fear that giving the franchise to the black man

[1] Käthe Schirmacher.

[2] See chapter xiv.

may lead to the election of an ebony president, similar to the fear that giving the franchise to women might lead to the highest post in the State being occupied by some worthy successor of Susan Anthony.

Scientists tell us that in all civilized countries the size of families decreases in almost the exact ratio to the increase of wealth and culture, but they have not yet come forward with an altogether satisfactory explanation of the cause of this state of things. In Sweden young men of the upper classes marry much later than they did of old; in Germany, Austria, France, and England this is also the case. In Germany sociologists are writing of the decrease in that country's birth-rate as a national danger, and attributing it to the late marriages of its young men; they point out that the population of Germany is only kept stationary by a regular influx of Poles, Russians, Bohemians, and Italians;[1] they are urging young Germans to marry, and telling them that a bachelor is only half a man.[2] The French nation[3] confesses candidly that its men marry later in life than was formerly the case, that the marriage rate is declining, and that marriages, when they are contracted, prove less satisfactory than of old. "But, granted that a suitor presents himself," cries a Frenchman,[4] "is he likely in these days to make a satisfactory husband?" And he adds, "This question is one that is calculated to make many a heart beat

[1] Müller. [2] "*ein Halbmensch.*"
[3] Dr G. Guibert, "Le Mariage et les Théories Malthusiennes," 1906.
[4] Turgeon.

dolefully." In Austria the state of affairs is no better. Dr Emil Seyler, of Vienna, reminds his compatriots that Hippocrates looked upon woman as undeveloped man, as an incomplete, imperfect creature, and that Hartmann and his followers thought the old Greek was correct, but he goes on to say that if he, Dr Seyler, were a woman, he would not allow himself to be convinced of his inferiority. "Were I woman," he cries, "I would challenge these hard-hearted philosophers to turn their attention to themselves, cast a glance at the men of the twentieth century, and throw more light upon *their* brilliant virtues, and *their* sublime characteristics." Seyler then goes on to ask on his own account, whether the man of the twentieth century is really so perfect, as regards his physical and psychical qualities, as a social unit, and last, but not least, as a husband,—that woman, who is often wiser than he is, should fall on her knees before him and recognise his natural superiority? Dr Seyler boldly announces that man, in Austria at least, has entered upon a state of physical degeneration so visible that none can deny it. "Take, for instance," he cries, "one of the so-called lions of society, let him undergo a physical examination and you will see what a miserable object he presents. The man of the twentieth century cannot, in the writer's opinion, lay claim to being a pattern husband; to call him his wife's protector is to use an empty phrase. The Austrian of to-day marries, not that he may maintain a wife, but that he may better himself economically and socially, and have more money to

spend upon his private personal pleasures. A husband demands implicit obedience from his wife, honour, and faithfulness unto death, and is under the impression that his natural superiority gives him the privilege of sinking to the lowest depths of degradation in the company of one, two and three mistresses. Seyler tells us further, that in the last year of the nineteenth century, Germany's Secretary of State, Niebirding, branded our epoch with the epithet, "A period of moral degradation," and the Members of the Reichstag unanimously gave their assent. This public and authorised recognition of the demoralisation of our age is the real cause of the increased impetus that has been given to the woman movement on the Continent,[1] and no cynical philosopher, be he a Schopenhauer or a Hartmann, will succeed in stemming its flow. "And what," continues Dr Seyler, "does the man of the twentieth century look for in the girl he proposes to marry? A young creature endowed with beauty and all sweet feminine charms, a girl virtuous and pure in body and soul, home-loving and modest? Oh no, she need not be all that, but she must have money, plenty of money, she must dress her hair in the latest style, she must play tennis and football, she must cycle, ride and drive, she must drink freely and be able to smoke. Let the parents see to it then that their daughters may be able to fulfil the requirements of the husband she is to make happy." And in Belgium things are no better, the Mayor of Ypres informs us that a Belgian's conception of the contract

[1] Dr Emil Seyler, "Die Frau des xx. Jahrhunderts."

called civil marriage is totally different from the Christian conception of it. He states, moreover, as a fact, that nearly three-fourths of the men of his country who enter the marriage state are physically unfit.[1] In Sweden the marriage rate is even lower than it is in Belgium. We learn from the latest available statistics that the marriage rate of Stockholm is lower than that of any other European capital. "The extraordinarily low marriage rate in our country," wrote Sundberg in 1900, "is one of the most serious problems that present themselves to the student of social politics." And Sundberg is quoted as an authority by Dr Elon Wikmark, who also has his country's good at heart. Among the upper classes of Sweden celibacy has been steadily increasing for the last thirty years among both sexes; the number of bachelors among the aristocracy and upper-middle class being very nearly as great as the number of celibate women. "Why should I marry," says the young man, "when I can get all I want without"? And the high spirited Swedish girl, if she be blessed with a happy home and all the accessories that rank and competence can bring, is beginning to look upon marriage as a very doubtful blessing. It is painful to hear them speak. "Every man has many wives," cries a Swedish maiden, "even when he is married. We know that eighty per cent. of our men are suffering from contagious diseases, and we cannot bring ourselves to risk the evil that marriage might entail. No, we do not wish to

[1] "Pres de trois quarts des hommes entrent le mariage contaminés et contagieux." "La femme Électeur," 1901.

marry."[1] In Sweden, man appears to be losing his prestige. Many thoughtful Englishmen who wish to see their country prosper are looking askance at the changes that are taking place among English women of the aristocracy, and the upper-middle class. "This increased development of the female mind," they urge, "and the widened outlook upon life which must result from it will, we fear, lead to a reluctance to enter the married state, and that in its turn will lead to a decrease in the birth-rate in the very classes where an increase is most to be desired for the welfare of our race." What if they are right? Perhaps, after all, our newspapers are laying too much blame at the door of Malthus.

Reformers are crying out that the luxury of our age is deterring young men from marriage. "The demoralisation of our women through luxury," writes a Frenchman,[2] "is the greatest reproach of our age. A man must indeed have plenty of money before he can offer to make a home such as the elegant nullities of these times demand. Woman is sacrificing too much to the demon Fashion. She seems almost incapable of moderating her desires. Men's incomes grow smaller, but the style in which their wives must live is more expensive than it has ever been." What our grandparents regarded as luxuries are now the necessaries of respectable existence. This alone will account for the decrease in early marriages. "I married on four hundred a year," said a white haired old English gentleman in my hearing, "it was ample in those days, and my wife and I brought up our

[1] See Letters published by Dr Möbius, 1905. [2] Turgeon.

four children upon it, but one could not do that now." The demand for the superfluities of life is rapidly increasing in Germany. I heard a German officer gravely remark in the year 1904 that his country's growing taste for luxurious living would soon be comparable to that of Rome before her downfall. And Dr Müller tells us that it is not the lack of sufficient means that deters Germans from marriage, but their love of ease, their reluctance to take part in the battle of life; that is why there is such desperate competition for the easy posts with high salaries. "Few are the men in these days who would be willing to embark upon a life of adventure and of self-denial, and few are the women who would have the pluck to accompany them."

The growing disfavour with which marriage is looked upon in France has been attributed partly to the influence and spread of unhealthy literature. The average woman there, as in other countries, still prefers a novel to any other kind of book, and the novel tends, as Turgeon justly points out, by the pleasantness of its style and the interest of its story, to produce the very social condition it portrays. The invention of the novelist too often becomes the reader's model. This is sometimes true even when crime is the novelist's theme. We have an example in the young gardener's assistant who, when questioned as to why he had murdered a dentist with an axe, in a railway train near Hamburg, replied that he had been stimulated by reading of similar crimes.[1] And how many boys have been led to the choice of a sea-

[1] See *Daily Telegraph*, Nov. 14, 1906.

faring life by the perusal of pirate stories? In Paris, as in London, women are becoming more and more lax in the choice of their literature;[1] some are led, as we have already pointed out,[2] by curiosity to read what they should not; but by far the greater number do so merely from a spirit of imitation, from a wish to be up-to-date. The society girl must be able to read everything, and, we are told, without a blush.

"When young people see," says a German writer, "how married people sigh over their chains, how impatient they appear to break them, they are not encouraged to marry." The opinion that marriage is merely a necessary evil is rapidly gaining ground in Germany, but not so much among the women as among the men, and as long as the men will not propose, the girls can hardly be blamed for preferring a life of independence to the joys of marriage.

It has been stated in the English papers that our birth-rate of the first two quarters of the year 1906 was the lowest on record. The Registrar General estimates that whereas ten per cent. of the total decline is due to the decrease in illegitimate births, twenty per cent. of the total decline is due to the decline of the marriage rate. The number of men in the upper classes who hold back from marriage in England is increasing. And this is not, as some people pretend, a result of the higher education of women. Westermarck,[3] in whose native country, Finland, there is more comradeship between the

[1] Turgeon. [2] See chapter ii. on this subject.

[3] "The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas," 1906.

sexes than there has ever been in England, tells us that progress in civilisation has exercised an unfavourable influence on the position of women by widening the gulf between the sexes; and no one will deny that there is to-day, intellectually speaking, a far wider gulf between them in the wealthy middle class than in any other class in England. The education of an English princess is much more like that of a prince than is the education of a rich middle-class girl like that of her brother; it cannot then be argued that education has lifted these girls out of their proper sphere, though Krafft Ebing has asserted that such is actually the case in Germany, where, according to him, seventy-five per cent. of the marriages turn out unhappily. In consequence Englishmen complain that in the upper classes of English society it is almost impossible to make the acquaintance of a girl without becoming engaged to her. We choose partners for life as we choose them for a quadrille. And no girl shows her real self when she is "under arms," as a French mother has expressed it. A young Briton who is obviously on the lookout for a suitable life companion has recently confided to the public a few of his own meditations on this subject. He is convinced that the growing frequency of unhappy marriages in our middle class is due to the foolish customs and conventions which circumscribe and restrict society. "What opportunity," he asks, "has the average man of obtaining an exhaustive knowledge of his intended wife's character or temperament before the so-called engagement? He may, I admit, obtain some knowledge of her character on

the few occasions that he finds himself alone with her, or in the company of others, but as for gaining a knowledge of her temperament, which is of the highest importance, from this he is absolutely debarred. An excursion together—say to the theatre —without other company, would mean that they were considered practically engaged. If the man retires in time, without being compromised or compromising the lady, well and good, but in that case he must retire from association with the whole family of which the lady is a member. If, instead of retiring he becomes engaged, whether on his active initiative, whether by drift—or on the initiative, *as often happens*, of the woman—the position for an ordinary man is well nigh hopeless. He can now obtain a thorough knowledge of his intended, but too late. If after a few months he finds that a mistake has been made, it is impossible to break off relations without, to put it mildly, a great deal of unpleasantness. Much sympathy is felt, and no doubt rightly, for the girl; much abuse, without reason, is poured upon the man. Will the average man, human and weak, go through this? No, with a mistaken sense of honour towards the girl and society, he drifts into the completion of the contract."

Convention and custom then, as well as our love of ease, luxury, and ostentation, are also contributing causes to the decline of our birth-rate. If we enquire still further we shall find that, in France, if not in England too, the increased facilitity and fashionableness of divorce are also considerable factors. The

official statistics of divorce in France show a steady increase in the number of cases annually registered from 1885 to 1898 ; and in almost every case divorce is granted. In December 1898 at the Seine tribunal, ninety eight couples were divorced at one sitting; since that year, there has, however, been a slight decrease.[1] "How," cries Turgeon, "with upwards of thirty unions dissolved for every thousand contracted can we be astonished to find that our population remains stationary?" And then he adds, that but for the strenuous resistance of the Catholic Church to the progress of divorce, the French people would find before long that marriage was in reality nothing more than a kind of "successive polygamy." And what about America? "Easy divorce," says President Roosevelt, "is a bane to any nation. Divorce is an appalling curse." And he agrees with the clergyman who has been reminding the English people that de-civilization—the fate of more than one modern State,—begins with the disintegration of the *home*.[2] In some States of America divorce is granted for insanity, in others it is granted on account of brutality, in others infidelity is a sufficient plea; but some States, if we may believe the *New York Evening Journal*, permit divorce as the result of a whim. The American nation as a whole watches the individual States, and is learning by their experience. Results in Florida, in Rhode Island, in South Dakota, in Illinois, are carefully noted and discussed. Some thoughtful Americans are of the opinion that the present laws are only passing phases intended to deal

[1] Turgeon. [2] Article in *Church Times*.

with passing criminality, just as during the earthquake in San Francisco they had to shoot a man for merely entering a building, though nobody imagined that that would be permanent. "The divorce problem will in time," they say, "be solved by the natural voluntary abolition of divorce."

The English press regales its readers almost daily with columns of sensational divorce news. The French press is forbidden to publish a word of the evidence given in a divorce case or even to remark upon it. In Austria, too, far more privacy is maintained than in England or America. It shall be left to the reader to decide which system is the best. The English public has of late shown much dissatisfaction with our existent divorce laws. Many people[1] think it unjust that misconduct on the part of the wife is sufficient to secure a dissolution of the marriage ties, so long as it is not considered an equally decisive offence when committed by the man. The difference here made between the sexes can hardly be justified by reason or morals. Yet there are those who, knowing the frailty of mortals and the magnitude of the evils to be dealt with, shudder at the thought that in doing away with the inconsistencies and anomalies of our present law, legislators may be led to make divorce more easy for both parties than it is at present. Since the Act for the Neutralisation of marriage was passed in 1895, we are told, "applications for this form of release have rapidly increased. Separation orders are being signed by our magistrates at the rate of six or seven thousand a year."[2] A very large class of

[1] See article *Daily Telegraph*, May 7, 1906. [2] *Ibid.*

persons is thus coming into existence whose situation is isolated and cheerless at the best, and in many cases painful and difficult beyond description. A penalty is placed upon virtue and a premium upon frailty. The law itself points to the violation of morality as the only way out of a cruel and unnatural predicament. Permanent separation without divorce in the upper-middle class often means social ruin to women who are not only innocent of any crime, but have proved themselves the most faithful of wives and the most devoted of mothers; their friends look askance and drop away, and they soon find themselves under a dreadful cloud. Few of us will disagree with those of our countrymen who tell us that an entire revision of our laws bearing upon the dissolution of matrimony cannot be avoided if the ideal of happy marriage is to remain the foundation of modern civilization, and that "it is upon the hope that women will be levelled up to men in mind, and men to women in morality, that the future of humanity depends." In the meantime, there is perhaps some consolation to be derived from the reflection that bigamy, which occurs with painful frequency in the first half of the nineteenth century, and which was the chief topic of Miss Braddon's novels, has become comparatively rare since the passing of the Divorce Act in 1857. There is only one case on record of an English woman obtaining a decree of divorce before that year.

Westermarck,[1] who is perhaps the most modern authority, tells us that human marriage is probably

[1] Westermarck, "The History of Human Marriage," 1901.

an inheritance from some ape-like progenitor. This sociologist's studies have led him to the conviction that there never existed a primitive condition of communal marriage, and that marriage, generally speaking, has become more durable in proportion as the human race has advanced. "The history of human marriage," he says, "is the history of the relation in which women have been gradually triumphing over the passions, the prejudices, and the selfish interests of men." If this be so, let woman press onwards and courageously continue her triumphs, but let her put her finger in her ears when she meets with those who would have her retrace her steps. Durkheim, the eminent French sociologist, strongly condemns divorce as threatening the interests of the very institution of marriage. He points out, moreover, as a statistical and historical fact, that divorced persons commit suicide much more frequently—the exact rate being about four to one —than married people. According to him, M. Bertillon has proved by statistics that divorce varies in degree in every country in proportion to the character and mental stability of its inhabitants. Marriage is, in Durkheim's opinion, the strongest preventative of suicide, particularly when children are born of the union.[1] A Frenchman, however, is forbidden by the law to marry before he has reached the age of twenty-five without having first obtained the full consent of his parents. This is why in the lower classes, so many couples live together without marriage. Amongst the obstacles to marriage in

[1] See quotation from "Revue Bleu" in *Public Opinion*, Aug. 17, 1906.

general, we may reckon the emigration of men from the country to large towns as well as their emigration to other countries, and military service, but these causes do not materially affect the classes of which we have been speaking.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOUL OF THE OUTCAST

AN Austrian writer,[1] who appears to have spent many years of his life in the capacity of a Catholic priest, has ushered in the twentieth century with an attempt to persuade the matrons and maidens of Vienna and Berlin that it is no more a slur upon them, and upon their sex, that some women should earn their daily bread by a life of dishonour, than it is a slur upon an officer of the army that some men should choose to earn their bread as shoeblacks. He even goes so far as to assert that such poor women are of more service to the State than are the unmarried of the upper classes who have no occupation at all. He indicates very clearly however that for any man to lead a girl to take up the useful profession alluded to by false promises, or by any unfair means whatsoever, is criminal. It is strange that so clever a reasoner should overlook the truth that were men to abstain from criminally introducing fresh apprentices to the trade for the short space of ten years they would practically cut off the supply. Those whose humanity has stirred them to try and help these poor women can testify how small and insignificant is the

[1] Karl Jentsch.

contingent of girls who have entered upon that life willingly and with their eyes open. The young mother who goes on the street to save her babes from starvation, the girl who has not touched food for three days, the shop-assistant whose life of hopeless, underpaid drudgery has dulled for a time her sense of right and wrong, the sweated needlewoman whose brain has been turned by the misery of her lot—these cannot be said to take the first wrong step willingly, any more than the girl who has actually believed in a promise of marriage. And mental deficiency? Is that to be called free-will? It is estimated that nearly a third of the unmarried mothers who enter the infirmary wards in our large English towns are of feeble mind.[1]

In the year 1806 it was estimated that there were no fewer than fifty thousand women living in London who earned their livelihood by prostitution, and that during the previous thirteen years from eighty to one hundred thousand had died from the effects of that poisonous trade.[2] The longest period for which a girl can support such a life is five years, but few can endure it so long. The latest estimates show that at the commencement of the year 1906 there were upwards of eighty thousand women in London who were living, more or less, upon the wages of prostitution, and that of these not less than one-tenth were removed from the ranks by death within the limits of their first year.[3] It is clear, then, that if the male

[1] See Poor Law Conference, 1905-06.

[2] See "Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis," by Colquhoun.

[3] See "Statistics Published by the London Female Guardian Society," 1906.

population of London were to restrict themselves to the introduction of new apprentices to this trade by open and fair means, death alone would soon thin their ranks very perceptibly. From every sick prostitute disease is spread to several men, and the evil does not stop there, for it is constantly carried to pure wives, and inherited by innocent children. No police or medical suppression in any country has ever been able to prevent this. Dr Möbius, who has gone thoroughly into the subject, is convinced that the majority of the men who die before the age of sixty of so-called brain and heart affections are in reality the victims of venereal disease. There are a number of fatal diseases which doctors attribute solely to these causes, and which are known to break out sometimes as long as fifteen years after the victim has been infected. It is now an undisputed fact that paralysis and syphilis go hand in hand; where the one spreads, there the other also becomes more frequent. Both are more prevalent in large towns than in the country, and both are on the increase.[1] In Germany from 12 to 15 per cent. of the adult male population are suffering from the last mentioned disease, and numbers of little children are found to have inherited it. Surely the time has come for English wives and mothers to ask themselves whether it really is "a gross absurdity to preach the same code of morals to both sexes."

An English doctor of the Oxford University, named Jean de Gaddera, studied the disease of leprosy which was so prevalent in Europe, and particularly

[1] See Möbius, "Geschlecht und Krankheit," 1903.

in England, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In his book on the subject, he devoted a chapter to the spread of leprosy by women, and showed how, by means of prostitutes, it was carried from man to man. The fact, moreover, has never been disputed that in those days serious cases of contagion were far more common in England than in any other country. In the time of Matthew Paris, who wrote in the thirteenth century, there were more than nineteen thousand leper hospitals in Europe. Many of our old churches have their leper windows[1] through which persons infected with the disease were allowed to receive the sacrament. In ecclesiastical writings of the middle ages constant reference is made to the disease of elephantiasis, which had many victims in every rank of society. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, both these terrible scourges were considered to be of venereal origin, and even in our day, the bacillus of leprosy eludes discovery. Charles VIII. of France became so horrified at the evils resulting from prostitution in his day that he ordered many public women to be burned alive; and Marshal Strozzi, on one occasion, caused eight hundred of these wretched women to be cast into the river. As far back as the twelfth century, all the governments of Europe made a great effort to stop the spread of leprosy and elephantiasis by means of the most stringent police regulations. The Crusaders brought into Europe the worst evils of Oriental countries, and spread them, by means of women, far and wide among the more civilized nations. Russia,

[1] Christchurch, Bournemouth, for instance.

the borderland between East and West, is still infected with the awful disease of elephantiasis, as well as of leprosy; English travellers need not visit the hospitals to study it; its victims may be seen in pilgrim garb by church doors begging the worshippers for alms; they may be seen crawling along the thronged pavements of the beautiful town of Kieff, crawling like reptiles between the foot-passengers, and showing too clearly that all other means of locomotion are denied to them. Such evils make their way silently and unostentatiously from one country to another. Great revolutions drive the refuse of one country into another. Terrible scourges have before now made their way into regions where it has been difficult to account for their presence, and have committed their ravages under euphemistic names such as that of "small pox." In the middle ages, syphilis and leprosy had the same saints, St Job and St Rock. At one time it was thought that Christopher Columbus brought the former with him from America in 1493, but historians have proved that it existed in Europe before that time. Joseph Grundbeck's treatise is the oldest extant on this disease, which has been called "venereal leprosy." European doctors had at one time so great a horror of it, that they would often refuse to treat it. And now, in spite of its concomitant evils, Karl Jentsch would have the women of Austria believe that prostitution is a useful and necessary institution, and that girls of the lower classes have no virtue to lose. Two women, however, whom he has failed to convince, appeared in the Austrian Court on November 2, 1906, as private prosecutors

against the white slave traffic. "A widow[1] named Riehl had, under the guise of a ladies' saloon, and with the knowledge, and partly under the supervision of the police, held as prisoners, girls who had had the misfortune to fall into her hands. She took away their clothes to prevent their escape. The rooms they were kept in were never aired, and the windows were always locked. During the night the girls drank brandy and champagne with the visitors to the saloon, and were struck with iron hooks when they refused to drink." Madame Riehl is evidently a disciple of Herr Karl Jentsch: she must have studied his philosophical writings, and been penetrated with his convictions that, at least for the girl who has once been led astray, there can exist no moral code. The girls may not have objected to being locked in, and they would very soon have fallen in with the rules of their new profession. It seems a thousand pities that they should have been disturbed, for they were about to become useful members of State, far more useful than the rich old maiden ladies of Vienna can ever hope to be; they would perhaps have joined before long the ghastly crowds of Regent Street. Herr Jentsch appears to be much exercised in his mind on the subject of English morality. He declares that the superior virtue of Englishmen is "nothing but hypocritical cant." He believes what he has read, namely, that English fathers are painfully anxious to guard their growing sons from every kind of temptation, not from any high moral motive, but for the practical reason, that lucrative posts are more

[1] See *Daily Telegraph*, November 3, 1906.

difficult to obtain than formerly, and that young men who have dulled their brain-power with debauchery find it difficult to get through the examinations, without the passing of which the posts in question are not to be had. By failing to get through his examinations a young fellow runs the risk in these days of ruining his career. That is why anxious fathers would like to see the whole system of prostitution done away with for ever. According to this writer, it was Martin Luther who introduced cant and hypocrisy into this world, for, until the Reformation, men did not dream of pretending to be moral.

England in particular has earned a reputation for hating and avoiding the *name* of what is bad far more than she hates or avoids the thing itself. Taine remarked long ago that religion and morality were a coin that every Englishman was obliged to carry in his pocket. "Vice," says Max O'Rell, "is not officially recognised in England, but it is tolerated in the streets and parks, and I do not see very clearly in what way morality is benefited." This writer has described some of the principal streets of our capital as being, from sunset till past midnight, the most hideous sight in London, and called it "*un spectacle unique en Europe.*" During the London season of 1906, English ladies found it made unpleasant for them even to step from the theatre into a cab when unaccompanied by a gentleman, and one lady from the country remarked to me, that after seeing the present state of things she should not feel justified in leaving her chauffeur outside a London theatre while

she attended a play. The ordinary well-behaved unostentatiously dressed woman can rarely pause for a moment before a shop-window in Oxford Street or Regent Street after five o'clock in the evening without attracting attention that she does not seek. This may be partly due, as a lady writing to the papers has suggested, to the increasingly cosmopolitan nature of our London crowds, but it is none the less a truth, as only too many ladies can testify. We have recently been informed through the press[1] that a number of notorious *souteneurs* have made the importation and exploitation of German courtesans in England a fine art, and that it has become a source of substantial profit to them. "The elegantly and showily dressed German women who infest the West-end are brought to London by these men, organised into a business body by them, financed by them, and marshalled in the streets. . . . They go on observation duty in the streets in which their white slaves are at work for them. . . . There are sometimes as many as fifty of these loathsome scoundrels congregated between the Circus and Regent Street and Windmill Street; and German is the language you will hear if you stand among them and listen to the business confidences they exchange. These are not the low-bred ruffians that English people commonly connect with the word 'bully,' the majority of them are men of education and business skill, men who make the women who live under their protection contribute to their income in a dozen different ways. There is no more infamous class in a civilized city than that

[1] By G. R. Sims, *Daily Telegraph*, May 1906.

which may be seen at the corner of Shaftesbury Avenue when, at 12.40, the crowd of gaily-dressed, good-looking young German women, the working staff of an alien organisation, which is practically a Traviata Trust, begin to flock homewards. Some of these men are actually married to the women they exploit, and have at the same time under their control a number of other women living in the same building. Driven out of the Fatherland by the drastic measures of the German police, measures taken at the instigation of the Emperor, they have made our hospitable shores their home."

On July 17th, 1906, Sir E. Henry stated, in his capacity of Commissioner of the Police, that the total number of women charged with prostitution in the Metropolitan area during 1903 was three thousand seven hundred and fifty-six. In 1904, four thousand one hundred and eighty-six were charged. In 1905, the number charged went up to four thousand nine hundred and twenty-nine. "I have seen it stated," said Sir E. Henry, "that a constable's activity in prosecuting cases affects his promotion. This is quite inaccurate. A constable's activity or otherwise with regard to arresting or prosecuting persons is not taken into account at all in considering the question of promotion."

It has been argued that prostitution cannot be the result of social conditions, for, if it were, outcasts would not return to their bad life when once they had been rescued. But the same might be said of drunkenness and opium-eating. The truth is that these poor women return to their evil life because, as

Mary Wollstonecraft put it more than a hundred years ago, man has taught them that a woman's honour does not depend upon her will, and that it can be taken from her independently of her will. Man has also made it hugely difficult for her to retrieve the first false step, and that is why she too often sinks to the lowest degree of vice. "The number of women who have been deceived," says Professor M. Benedikt of Vienna, "is far greater than the number of those who have deliberately chosen the wrong path, and the fall of the former class is in most cases the product of masculine egoism."[1] "Love may sometimes be found in the heart of an ascetic," says Legouvé, "but never in the heart of a libertine." Karl Jentsch would have us believe that, while the man who leads the woman to take her first downward step is a criminal, the man who leads her by honest payment to take her second downward step is blameless. Surely the Mormon idea of morality is superior to this! The Mormon says, "How much better to give the lonely woman a home while she is uncontaminated, honour her with your name, provide for her for life, and recognise your own offspring before the world." It is not really so surprising that in the space of forty-four years, this sect should have counted two hundred and fifty thousand souls among its adherents, for the Mormons think that polygamy practised openly is a better means of bringing virtue back to earth than polygamy practised in secret. The real originator of the sect was a German named

[1] Quoted from "Die Seelenkunde," by Louis Frank, in "La Femme Advocat," 1898.

Stork, a follower of Martin Luther, who developed into a fanatical admirer of Judaism, as it is described in the Old Testament. He became a servile imitator of Jewish customs and ideals, and had little difficulty in promulgating his retrogade doctrine among the German women of his day, for having once submitted to take the very subordinate position assigned to them by Luther, they had little dignity left to lose. The Mormonism of our day is merely a recrudescence of Stork's ideas.[1] The bevies of German women who find it so lucrative a business to dog the steps of the young men of England's upper classes in broad daylight, are among the unhappy victims of Martin Luther's low estimation of their sex, and of the gross error of which he was guilty, when he judged that man, though made in the likeness of his Creator, was incapable of self-restraint. In the latter days of the Venetian Republic troops of prostitutes were supplied annually from Germany to Venice, while the morals of Venetian women were noted for their purity.

On a bright summer's morning in April 1904, I joined a crowd of men whom I found clustering round a speaker in Hyde Park. The audience listened attentively while the orator, a South African negro—with ebony skin, rolling eyes and thick red lips, explained to them that it grieved him to the heart to see their beautiful young girls with golden hair and blue eyes standing at the street corner because they had not bread enough to keep them from starvation. "You men have not enough work to do here," he

[1] See Dora d'Istria on this subject.

said, "but you ought to come out to South Africa and work in the mines. You ought yourselves to be doing the work that Chinamen are doing for you. We black people are no use for manual labour of that kind; we are the agriculturists, the rightful cultivators of our native soil. Let us supply you with all the vegetables you and your families require, while you do the work that Chinamen are doing for you. Send them all home to China and do the work yourselves, then there will be no need for your women-folk to lead a life of shame." So this African negro did not think that the prostitution of English women was a necessary evil. Our studies in the direction of biology show conclusively that man is the only animal to make use of this system. Nowhere in the animal world has another species been found in which the female is forced to trade in its sex to minister to the pleasure of the male.

And suppose we take it for granted that those men are right who assert that the morality of English homes is due to such a system. It only comes to this, that for every honest wife, mother, sister or daughter, some one else's wife, mother, sister or daughter must be victimised. In 1887 it was proved that in the town of Edinburgh there were upwards of sixty miserable families whose only source of maintenance was the mother's dishonour. How many well-to-do middle-class women were thus kept pure and chaste? "Any gold," says Calderon, "will keep its colour under glass." Why does the pure English lady turn away with such disgust from the gaudy painted woman who now confronts her by daylight

in every London street, and who even rides beside her in the motor omnibus? English women are at last refusing to believe that man was fashioned lower than the brute, that instincts have been given him by his Creator which he has not the power to control, which must therefore entail the ruin of a fellow-creature before they can be pacified. English women have a higher opinion of their Creator than this, and a higher opinion of His handiwork. A man may not steal to satisfy his hunger or his thirst; how long will he persuade himself that he is justified in ruining a fellow creature in order to pander to an appetite? English mothers whose sons are growing up to manhood feel that this question touches them through their sons. "Is the pocket money I give to my boy for his first week in London to find its way into the pockets of a white slave overseer?" cries the anxious English father, "and shall my boy part with his money thus under the impression that he is acting blamelessly?" "Yes, alas, it must be so," he cries, like the man Aristotle tells of, who, when he was beating his father, said, "My father used to beat his father, and his father his again, and this little fellow here," pointing to his child, "will beat me when he is a grown man; it runs in the family." Prostitution has been supposed to run in the human family, so man has borne with it and countenanced it, and it has prospered hideously, till in these early days of the twentieth century it is a greater menace than ever. The evils which it has brought in its train are undermining marriage, and through marriage, the race.

The Catholic pays his conscience money to the priest; the Protestant has a pew in church, and gives liberally to the funds of the Salvation Army. No wonder that the dividends of the latter have reached the height of thirty thousand pounds a year. The few women who have dared to speak have been well hated for their aggressive chastity, nevertheless "*the possession of a truer and more complete knowledge on this painful subject, by women in general, would do more to lessen the number of the most unfortunate outcasts of society than all the secret discussions of the House of Commons.* However pleasant it may be for women themselves to entrench themselves in decorum and refinement from so painful a knowledge, and however consonant such behaviour may be with the prejudices of society—yet—such is not the manner in which these terrible disorders can be remedied. Since females are also even more interested than males in the suppression of these evils we can see no propriety in endeavouring to keep them in ignorance of their existence."[1]

"In the eyes of the student of the Bible," says Karl Jentsch, "those gentlemen make themselves ridiculous who pretend to believe that a prostitute's soul is in a worse state than the soul of the self-righteous, the hard-hearted and the boaster, against whom Christ Himself was so severe." And he proceeds to assert that the sins of a prostitute are unavoidable, for they are necessary to the health and happiness of mankind. According to him and to a writer

[1] Mrs Hugo Reid, "A Plea for Women," 1843. The italics are my own.

whom he quotes, the matrons and maidens of Britain owe the pure and chaste atmosphere of their homes to the existence of the seventy thousand prostitutes who are supported by the voluntary contributions of their husbands and brothers. It will doubtless be a great consolation to the tender-hearted ladies of England to feel quite sure that prostitution is after all as honourable a calling as that of the shoe-black, and that "to wish for the conversion of one of these women is like wishing we could persuade a cat to lay eggs." To show how great is the moral gulf that lies between women of the middle class and those below them, this writer tells us that the very man who would think nothing of robbing a barmaid or a servant girl of her honour, would be ready to shoot the fellow who should dare to persuade his daughter to marry beneath her. Karl Jentsch does not deny that there are rare cases of girls in the lower classes being gifted with a sense of moral right and wrong. But these, in his opinion, are anomalies, incongruities of nature quite beneath our consideration. According to him every young man has a perfect right to sow his wild oats, and neither the defenders of Women's Rights nor the Socialists are justified in their attempts to raise the moral tone of these poor women, who are usefully doing the work assigned them by their Maker, "but," he adds, "should they (the Socialists, etc.) succeed in doing what the Christian Church has vainly tried for ages to accomplish, then prostitution would come to an end.

It is my firm conviction, after devoting many

months of study to this painful subject, and wading through the sociological and scientific literature of many countries and ages, that there is only one way in which prostitution and the evils it brings in its train can be effectually grappled with. It can only be grappled with by the direct instrumentality of our young men. All other means, however powerful, can only be effectual in so far as they influence our men. As long as English doctors and teachers continue to uphold the belief that a young man cannot practise abstinence without endangering his health, so long will these continue to require the sacrifice of victims to their bestial pleasures. Twenty years ago the mother who was nursing her child was told by her medical adviser that it was necessary for her own welfare and the child's that she should drink porter. To-day no doctor dreams of ordering alcohol under such circumstances—as a necessity. Fielding, in one of his novels, describes a scene in a sickroom where two doctors, having held a consultation over the invalid and having formed entirely opposite opinions as to the nature of the complaint, talk hard at one another for some time, with the result that each finally succeeds in convincing himself that his own view is the correct one. That is just the point medical science has reached to-day with regard to the requirements of our young men. There are already numbers of medical men in various parts of the world who boldly declare that the young man who has grown up pure can remain pure till he chooses to marry. The majority, however, still "look asquint on the face of truth," as Sir T. Browne put it.

"Sociology must not scorn to examine the most abnormal or reprehensible forms of conduct which ethics spurns, and pyschology too often fears to investigate."[1] Medical men are not in every case sociologists, nor do they, as a rule, care to take the initiative.

The present position of the medical profession in Britain is, as one of its members has recently declared,[2] far from satisfactory. "Its intellectual status is not what it should be. As the largest body of scientific workers, it ought to exercise a preponderating intellectual influence. It exercises hardly any." And he adds that it is not unusual to hear members of other professions express the opinion that doctors are tied as a rule to narrowness and conventionality. Those who do venture upon initiative encounter the most bigoted opposition, as was the case, for instance, with Sir Joseph Lister. The *British Medical Journal* reminded its readers in December 1904 that "bacteriology was a laughing stock to most men over middle-age up to a comparatively recent time." Twenty years ago suggestions that man could learn to navigate the air were received with ridicule.

[1] Osman Newland.

[2] J. Archdall Reid, "The Principles of Heredity," 1905.

CHAPTER V

THE WOMAN WHO IS AN OLD MAID

THE majestic elm, with its spreading branches and graceful foliage, the sweet-scented pine and the towering poplar all contribute to the happiness and welfare of humanity as surely as the fruitful apple tree or the slender grape-vine. We do not plant trees along the dusty streets of our towns in order that we may obtain fruit from them; but who is not thankful for their grateful shade in the noontide heat of a hot summer day? We do not say to every tree, "You will be a failure if you do not bear fruit." Yet we give woman to understand that if it does not fall to her lot to bear children she will miss the highest ideal of which her sex is capable. "If there is anything quite certain," says a twentieth century sociologist,[1] "it is that the normal destiny of a woman is to be a mother, and that any woman, however otherwise successful, who has not achieved this station, has essentially failed." Strangely enough this free-thinking materialist, who has shaken himself free from all religious belief, still upholds the monogamic marriage without attempting to estimate its necessary consequences. In all countries where

[1] C. W. Saleeby, M.D., 1906.

the monogamic marriage prevails there must always be numbers of self-respecting women who, for some good reason, find themselves passing through life without either husband or children. An American scientist boldly announces that it is impossible to escape the conclusion that a woman's natural education is completed only with maternity, "which is known to effect some slight changes in the sympathetic system, and possibly the spinal cord, and which may fairly be laid under suspicion of causing more structural modifications than are at present recognised." Such thinkers should, to be consistent, strenuously oppose the monogamic marriage; they should hasten to bring about a more satisfactory state of society, one in which every man could have either two legal wives at a time, or several in quick succession. The painful biological fact—the existence of over a million female failures in Britain, and nearly as many in every other civilised country, would then become a happy fiction. Alas, our biologists and physiologists are only ordinary men after all; they may be heroes as far as the dissecting-room, or even the hospital and the asylums, are concerned; their experiments may extend even "over many hundreds of normal men and women," but when it comes to deliberately facing public opinion, then courage completely fails them, and they leave it to their followers, who are not always biologists, to proclaim that the monogamic marriage is doomed; and to "assist in knocking down the barriers that are falling fast enough as it is." Various anarchical socialists are already striving with might and main to introduce

probationary marriages, easy divorce, and free love. "Oh ye unmarried women!" cries one of them, in a transport of sympathy. "Oh ye martyrs to cruel prejudice who are withering away under the cruel designation of old maids. Ye unhappy victims of social convention. Come to us, come and take your place in the ever-increasing army that fights for the emancipation of humanity."

There were no old maids before the time of Martin Luther, they are the product of the Reformation. Luther laid down the rule that every man should marry, and never gave a thought to the surplus women who before his time had found shelter and occupation in convents; from his day till the close of the nineteenth century the average Protestant woman (in England as well as in Germany and Scandinavia) who had failed to secure a husband, was treated as a nonentity; she had no money, no position, no status whatever, she lived on the forced charity of her relations, and as nephews and nieces grew up around her, she was treated by them too with contemptuous pity. "Aunt Margaret never goes out for a walk without asking mother's leave," said a young English girl to me, "though she's over fifty; she has never done anything in her life without asking somebody's permission. I don't believe she could begin to take care of herself now, she is too old." I was once talking on the subject of old maids with a group of Germans, when one of the party, a stout, good-natured *Burgomeister*, exclaimed, "Yes, it is hard to be an old maid in our country. I warned my youngest sister that if she did not marry, the day would come

when she would regret it, but she said she did not love any of the men who proposed, and insisted on having her own way. And what was the result? Why, to-day, while all her sisters have homes of their own, there she is, *sitzen geblieben, eine alte Stricktante*,[1] at everybody's beck and call, with no home that she can call her own, and no dignity; contemptuously pitied by all the women of her acquaintance who are more happily situated. I told her it would be so, and so it is." Among Protestant nations, a certain reproach still attaches itself to the old maid, with the natural result that many well-to-do sensitive girls, not having sufficient stamina to bear that reproach, rush blindly into matrimony, when in reality they would have done better for themselves by remaining single; they marry for the sake of the status that marriage gives; they feel that with a wedding-ring on their finger and the title of a married woman, they will be somebody, whereas in reality they lose more than they gain, for once married, their glory, however dazzling, is only reflected glory; while their husbands live they can hardly be said to enjoy any individual independence; all the power many of them have, and it may, indeed, be very considerable, is that of the slave who employs cunning and intrigue to gain his ends.

If there is no disgrace in being a bachelor, why should there be any in being an old maid? We need not in these days look far to find the answer to our question. The reason why it is a reproach to be an old maid is, that the life of an old maid is as a rule an idle, lonely, empty life, whereas the life of a bachelor is

[1] Left sitting, a knitting old maid.

usually as full of active work as that of any married man. We do not dream of calling a woman an old maid if she is the bright bustling matron of a hospital or the manageress of a thriving business. Once remove the stigma of idleness and emptiness from a woman's life, and no reproach will be attached to her spinsterhood. The unhappiness, too, of the old maids is as much a result of their poverty as of anything; the majority of them are left without sufficient means of maintaining a decent position in society. Was there ever a woman who did not appreciate the pleasure of showing hospitality? Yet this pleasure is denied to the average old maid. We shall never know how many Englishwomen of good family have entered the marriage state without love because they saw before them only one alternative, namely, that of ending their days in a garret or a "Home for Decayed Ladies." If such marriages turn out unhappily and end with divorce, there is nothing in that to surprise us. Yet we are puzzled, perplexed, and saddened at the increased frequency of divorce in all civilized countries. Were the female sex enabled by their early training to maintain themselves as the other sex does,[1] were they equally invested with property, equally independent and free from ridicule if unmarried, equally protected by law and public opinion, there would be less husband-hunting, less marrying for other reasons than love, less legal and unlegal prostitution, less work for our divorce courts, and a less perceptible decline in our birth-rate.

England to-day contains thousands of lonely middle-

[1] See "Can Woman Regenerate Society," 1844.

aged old maids with straitened means, who were not so very long ago merry young girls in happy middle-class families, girls who never gave a thought to the future while an affectionate father and manly brothers guarded them from every ill and warded off every anxious thought. The fathers who loved them so dearly have been separated from them by death, and the brothers by distance or their own family cares. There is often no male relative to whom these women can turn when in perplexity; they serve as a solemn warning to younger women, saying sadly to the young girls of their acquaintance, "My dears, do not make the mistake I made. Look at my lot, and take care that you make a better use of your youth and good looks than I made of mine." Too many of their listeners, taking these words to heart, rush madly into the arms of the first man who presents himself. Thus are our poor, tender-hearted, innocent old maids a cause of far greater evil than they themselves ever dream of.

As long as marriage is the only respectable means by which a woman of the middle-class can rise in the world, so long will that institution continue to be, in thousands of cases, a miserable failure. As long as the unmarried daughter is expected to be the household drudge, so long will girls marry in order to escape that position. In hundreds of English homes domestic or social affairs constantly demand the services of the unmarried daughter, and she naturally feels the strain as years go on and no prospect but that of an impecunious and lonely celibacy arises before her. As her parents grow older it is she who has to deal with the cook and arrange what everybody is to eat: all the

servant worries of a large household fall upon her shoulders. She has to arrange for the servants' holidays, for the replacing of those who are sick—in short, it is she who has to see to all those petty details which contribute to the smooth running of a household. "Ah!" she sighs. "A married woman, in compensation for these cares, gets the status and authority of her position, and the admiring affection of her husband. I only have, to support me, such little sense of filial duty as I possess. My time is so fully occupied that all thought of study or self-improvement is quite out of the question. When my aged parents are gone, and my brothers scattered and absorbed with homes of their own, then I shall have plenty of time on my hands, but then it will be too late—the activity and buoyant enthusiasm of youth will be gone for ever." Old maids are not necessarily women who have never had any work to do; far from it; they are almost always those who have, in forgetfulness of self, devoted their years of youth to the care of others; it is not their fault that others have ceased to need them, and that they are left stranded without any work in the very years of their life when the solace that work brings with it is most needed. "If women who have been shut out from the world of reality, and compelled by usage to endure the corrosion of unoccupied thought and the decay of unemployed powers, were able to speak fully and truly as they sink into their unearned graves, it would be found that their lives had been one hollow misery, redeemed solely by that degree of action that had been permitted to them in order that they might

in anywise live." Thus wrote Harriet Martineau in 1837, and her words are as true to-day as when they were written.

I never yet met with a woman over twenty who would own that she had not received one offer of marriage. But many a fond mother has told me proudly that her daughter has "had plenty of chances." It seems then that every woman gets an opportunity, or else that she feels herself at fault if she does not, and hides the facts accordingly. I do not, of course, include in this category those women of the Catholic religion who have voluntarily chosen a life of celibacy. "After the Reformation," says a Swedish author,[1] "woman had only one right to existence, as wife and mother, under the guardianship of the husband; apart from this, she led only the accessary existence of a fine, or ordinary, courtesan. Finally, as old maid, she became a superfluous member of the family, who had in modesty to efface herself. Aside from her available or unavailable sexuality she had no cause for existence; she was altogether superfluous. As the family could no longer support the steadily increasing number of superfluous members and endeavoured to push them off, the Woman Question arose." Another Swedish writer[2] tells us that the main cause of the woman movement in Sweden was the introduction of steam engines; in fact some have asserted that it is there caused entirely by steam. Fredrika Bremer, the Swedish novelist, took up the cause of unmarried women in Sweden about the same time that Camilla

[1] Laura Marholm. [2] Wikmark.

Collet influenced Ibsen to take up the cause of married women in Norway. It is estimated that at the present day only one out of every three grown up women in Sweden is married. In the German Empire, there are very nearly a million more women than men, while in Great Britain the "superfluous women" number considerably more than a million. In France there are only some two hundred and seventy thousand more women. Taking the whole of Europe together there are reckoned to be one thousand and twenty-four women to every thousand men. These extra women are not women with happy homes and no need to trouble about the future, they are not women with fathers and husbands and brothers always at hand to advise and protect them; they are women who are compelled to fight life's battle for themselves, for the simple reason that there is no one else to fight it for them. Only a very small proportion of them can afford to live in idleness, and only a yet smaller proportion have homes worthy of the name. How comes it then that when these women, who are human after all, in spite of their sex, go bravely forth into the world and join in the struggle for existence, how comes it that in England men who call themselves Christians can write to the papers as they are doing and announce that woman's proper sphere is her home, and that in that home she ought to stay? Just now, however, we are only dealing with women of the middle and upper classes of society, unmarried, without a home they can call their own, and without any serious life work. Medical men have constantly uttered the

opinion that the one thing wanting to such women is marriage. They tell us that it is purely from want of a husband that these women wither and grow old before their time,—as if homelessness, idleness and poverty were not in themselves sufficient to bring about a premature old age! Whoever saw a rich and influential maiden lady grow old before her time? Such old maids can afford to snap their fingers at their married sisters and say truly that they have the best of it. The rich old maid can show hospitality to her heart's content, she always has more friends than she requires. If she is kind-hearted there are a thousand ways in which she can contribute to the happiness of others, and there is no reason why she should prefer to shower her benefits upon cats and dogs in preference to human beings, except it be that her parents were at fault in not educating her mind and heart to nobler interests. The rich old maid may indeed have her faded dreams, her private sorrows and her hours of loneliness, but it is not she who makes the woman problem. In the bright days to come, when every human being shall be taught to look upon work as humanity's highest privilege, and upon an idle life as something beneath contempt, then the rich old maids will be among the happiest as well as the most useful members of society, though plodding and conscientious biologists may still tell them that they are imperfect specimens of womanhood.

The attitude of women towards virginity in their own sex is truly singular. "Woman," says Weiniger, "only respects woman when she is married, no matter

to whom. Women are altogether to blame for the unpleasant associations which are so unfortunately connected with old maids. Women and girls talk contemptuously of old maids, but no man was ever heard to do so: women think that old maids have made a virtue of necessity. Virgin worship owes its origin to men." One would think that Weiniger had never come in contact with the doctrines of our materialistic biologists, in whose judgment it is every woman's biological duty to provide for the continuance of her race, in spite of the fact pointed to long ago by Col. Higginson, that children are not the sole evidence of service rendered to the State. "The very fact," he remarks, "that during one half of the years of a woman's average life, she is made incapable of child-bearing, show that there are, even for the most prolific and devoted mothers, duties other than the maternal." Some very good women in England are still telling our young girls that motherhood is, for every woman, the worthiest goal, without suspecting that the doctrine they preach is dangerously conducive to that legal prostitution, euphemistically known as loveless marriage, if not to yet greater evils.

In Japan, old maids as well as old bachelors are almost entirely unknown, according to Westermarck; though I myself, when in that country, met with several of the former. Among the peasantry of Russia an old maid is something very rare indeed, and as I have before remarked, this species of woman suffers extinction in all countries that come fully under the sway of Islam, it being a product of Western civilization; biologists are supported by

socialists, protestants and rationalists in their view that it is an evil. The Catholic Church alone has, from the first, and quite consistently, opposed this theory, for it has always taught that the attainment of perfect womanhood does not depend upon the physiological function of maternity, and that the true sphere of woman lies wherever she can live nobly and do useful work.[1] Ever since the days of Augustine, who believed that unmarried children would shine in heaven as beaming stars, while their parents would give out a less brilliant lustre,—ever since the days of St Paul, who told fathers that marrying-off their daughters was good, but that not marrying them off was better,—has the Catholic Church held virginity in honour: it has always held that marriage is not woman's only calling; that neither man nor woman is dependent upon the opposite sex for the perfection of their being; that male and female were in truth formed as complements to one another that they might contribute towards the continuance of the species, but it denies the existence of any physical or pyschical law compelling the individual to marry in the interest of his or her personal development. The Catholic Church points to Christ, the second Adam, who stands alone, in virgin purity, dedicated to the glory of the Father and to the salvation of the universe. The Catholic Church teaches that he who makes our coarser animal instincts a pretext for the necessity of marriage, dishonours man,—man, who was formed after the likeness of his Creator,—man, whose greatest privilege is his reason, and the liberty which

[1] See Bishop Spalding, "Woman in Higher Education."

the right use of that reason involves; man, whose first duty it is to master his instincts and to exercise the virtue of self-control. The Catholic Church would have us believe that he who lowers human marriage to the stage of a mere biological function, the result of an instinct of which men and women are the abject slaves, robs it of its stability, by awakening the deadliest enemy that marriage has to contend with; he loosens every moral chain that has ever been able to keep in restraint the lowest of human passions. The Catholic Church sees—what many of the cleverest protestant men and women of our day do not see, what socialists, biologists and rationalists fail to see—that on the day when the world accepts the doctrine that woman cannot attain to perfect womanhood without marriage—woman will find herself in a state of more terrible subjection than has ever yet fallen to her lot.[1]

The Catholic Church teaches that a woman can be a woman, and a man can be a man, irrespective of fatherhood or motherhood. "To say that neither male nor female can come to full perfection without the other is to rob human beings of their moral independence and personality. And this applies to men as much as to women. Catholicism has often been reproached for its tardy participation in the woman movement, but, as Professor Mausbach justly reminds us, it could afford to come late because it had been there long before. No one can deny that Catholicism has through all the Christian ages striven

[1] See Prof. Joseph Mausbach, "Die Stelling der Frau im Menscheitsleben," 1906.

to care for the unmarried female in a way that no other church or community has ever done; it has upheld her dignity as a woman, and it has given her work. It has never looked upon her as failure. "No one," says Laura Marholm, "would think of calling a nun an old maid: nor does she feel herself such. She carries neither in face nor in figure the characteristic marks of one. Even in the sickly and suffering nuns there is a calm steadfastness—something noticeable—exactly that which is not found in the old maid; and which arises chiefly from the fact that the nun's imagination does not turn about a fixed idea with bitter feeling,—from the fact that she does not feel herself one of those who have nothing, and therefore compares herself enviously with those who have more. To be a nun is an honour, a result of voluntary renunciation. Old maidenhood is not an honour, but a humiliation." It can indeed be nothing short of a humiliation to any woman to find that, after concentrating all her energies and devoting the best years of her life to one end, she has failed publicly, that is in the eyes of all acquaintances and friends, to attain that end. I have seen a pitying smile on peoples' lips when the name of such a woman has been mentioned, and heard one of the company exclaim, "Ah, poor Miss L——, how hard she tried!" And this in England. In France it is not very different. "*Ce qui m'a toujours choqué chez les hommes,*" cried a French lady.[1] "*C'est le profond dédain avec lequel ils traitent la femme qui a atteint*

[1] Madame Edmond Adam. See "Le Mouvement Feministe," by Comtesse Marie Villermont, 1904.

l'age mûr. Dès ce moment, les reformateurs les plus sensibles cessent de s'occuper de son sort." Yet old maids are rare in France, because Convents are plentiful. More than a hundred and sixty-thousand unmarried French women are to be found to-day in these peaceful retreats, living a life full of useful work, and free from any care for the future. Imagine what would be the state of things if all these Convents were suddenly shut up and their inmates turned out into the streets to do the best they could for themselves. Then indeed would France have to lend an ear to the bitter cry of the old maid! "Ah, the old maids!" says another French writer.[1] "We do not think enough about their melancholy destiny, these poor neglected creatures are of no account in our society. Their lonely and monotonous life ebbs noiselessly away. Yet the bright dreams of early womanhood, the ambitious hopes of girlhood were once shared by them. As year after year has passed away they have been doomed to see those visions of happiness fade one by one and crumble into dust." "*Tandis que notre société prodique la plus scandaleuse indulgence aux vieux garçons, elle reserve tous ses dédains, toutes ses rigueurs, toutes ses plaisanteries aux vielles filles. Est-ce donc toujours leur faute si elles n'ont pu se marier?*"

In Protestant countries, religion and philanthropy are looked upon as the proper source of consolation for a lonely unmarried woman who is not actually obliged to earn her daily bread. She attends church

[1] Turgeon.

on week days as well as on Sundays, throws herself madly into a vortex of good works, and spends half her time at committee meetings. A clergyman of the Church of England was recently warned, on coming to a new parish, against the religious and philanthropic zeal of the unmarried ladies of his congregation! Miss Martineau found the same thing in America in the early days of last century. "I cannot enlarge upon the disagreeable subject of the devotion of the ladies to the clergy," she wrote, "I believe that there is no liberal-minded minister who does not see, and too sensibly feel, the evil of women being driven back upon religion as a resource against vacuity." A visitor from the planet of Mars who wished to get a good view of our Protestant old maids, could not do better, even in these days, than follow a popular preacher, no matter whether he be Anglican or Nonconformist, from one church to another for several consecutive Sundays. What can it be but a false craving for religious excitement which prompts so many respectable women to dog the steps of a popular divine—to arrive long before the service is to begin and stand in a patient *queue* outside the church door for half an hour or even longer? Such things can only occur when women make an occupation of religion; when they try in this way to fill what would otherwise be a void. The Anglican Church has sufficiently shown its appreciation of the usefulness of Catholic Sisterhoods, by establishing Sisterhoods of its own. Many good Protestants fear that this tends to a re-establishment of the ascendency of the clergy over women's

lives,[1] but they forget, perhaps, that our women of another generation will be in a far better position to think and act for themselves than has ever been the case in the past; their individuality will be more developed, and their self-reliance far greater; they will be less susceptible to outside influences.

A hundred years ago the family had more room for the old maid than it has to-day. Now the work that once fell to her lot is done in the factory, and there is rarely enough for her in the home of a married sister to make her worth her keep, except when there is sickness, and even here the trained nurse is ousting her services. She is not wanted as a governess after she has reached the age of forty. Her education has not fitted her for school-teaching. If she wants to go out into the world and work, there is very little she can do, and as long as she has enough to live on, her relatives protest against her doing that little. If, as only too often happens, she finds herself obliged to add to the meagre income left her by her parents, she is very clearly made to feel that by entering the service of strangers she is disgracing her family and descending to a lower rung of the social ladder than that to which she was born. Her old friends drop away one by one, or, if they still invite her to their houses, it is a feeling of charity alone that impels them. "What do Mr B——'s daughters do?" was a question recently put by a lady of my acquaintance. "Oh, they don't do anything," was the response; "they are *ladies*." There are of

[1] See chapter on this subject in "Women and English Life," by Miss Georgiana Hill.

course certain remunerative occupations which do not in any way involve the loss of caste, but they are all, without exception, closed to the average old maid on account of her age and her want of previous training. She was educated with a view to securing a husband, and having failed to secure one she finds it as hard to turn that education to another use as if she were a musician trying to turn his musical training to account by painting pictures, or applying for the post of ship's captain. Even when she turns all her energies in the direction of philanthropy the average old maid often does more harm than good. Nowhere do trained missionaries find so many difficulties awaiting them as in those places where kind-hearted, but indiscriminating maiden ladies have been before them. Even when the work of these good souls is organised by some competent person, much time is lost and much valuable energy wasted by the absence of previous training in the individual members of the organised body. One of the delegates to the Woman's Section of the Chicago Exhibition informed me on her retnrn, that the way in which the ladies talked one another down at their committee meetings, defied description. Opponents of the woman movement make capital of this weakness. We constantly hear them say how dreadful it would be to have women in Parliament! Yet the injustice of the inference is obvious, for how many of the women who meet in committee meetings to-day, have had a training calculated to fit them for such work? Compare the education these ladies received in their youth with that given to their male relatives, and

there will be no need to charge these shortcomings to their sex. How I should like to turn every man who has a word to say against the woman movement—into an impecunious old maid of the country to which he belongs. A very short dose of such experience would, I am convinced, render any man, with a spark of manliness in his soul, an ardent champion of the cause of woman. "It is one of the great triumphs of our civilization," says an anonymous writer in one of our English newspapers, "that we condemn a whole host of women to be lonely all their lives, to spend all their best years in a grim struggle for daily bread, with the hope of being able to save enough to keep themselves miserably alive through an unhonoured and unloved old age. How many thousand women are there in London to-day who have no home in the world—and never will have? Who likes to think about them?" No one likes to think about them, but they are there all the same, they are one of the silent, unnoticed influences that contribute to the woman movement.

In Germany as in England, the majority of the unmarried women are of the upper and middle classes. Dr J. Müller even goes so far as to assert that outside these classes the sexes are represented in almost equal numbers. This writer tells us that it is contrary to nature for a woman to remain single, but that though many women must end their days in single blessedness whether they will or no, on account of the scarcity of men, it is none the less a wrong state of things which allows them to fritter away their lives in aimless solitude. He

very properly reminds his countrymen that the unmarried woman has the same human rights as her married sister, and the same individual worth: in fact, often a higher worth. Beauty of face, size of dowry, and family connections are three considerations which go far to deciding who shall marry, and who shall remain single, in Germany as elsewhere; personal worth has often very little to do with the matter. "You seem to have followed some special method in your arrangement of the photographs of your lady acquaintances," said a friend to a young lieutenant, who had handed him his photograph album for inspection. "Yes," was the reply, "I have arranged them according to their probable dowries." Dr Müller is of the opinion that every girl should be brought up to have some particular interest in life, some intellectual or technical skill by which she can earn money, and feel herself independent of whatever money her parents may leave her.

It must always be painful to a self-respecting woman to feel that she is unable to stand upon her own feet; and the sooner those idiotic conventionalities which prevent her from doing so are done away with the better it will be. The girl who marries emancipates herself from the authority of her parents, the young man emancipates himself independently of his marriage. The young woman should be able to do likewise. The girl who marries finds occupation; the girl who does not marry must also find occupation, she must not be left to rot upon the parental tree like an unpicked apple; she

must not be bricked-in by high walls of social prejudices, and left to pine away in solitude; she must go forth into the world and develop her own personality by wrestling with the real difficulties of life. When she does this, it will no longer be possible to distinguish the old maid from the married woman by her premature wrinkles, her prudishness, her selfish eccentricities, and her melancholy countenance. Dr Müller suggests that the woman who has no home of her own shall take root in some one else's family, and make herself one with all the members of that family in its joys and in its sorrows, for his German mind cleaves to the old idea that woman's sphere is the home, and the homeless woman must therefore, in his opinion, force her way into somebody else's home and stay there. In short, she is to remain after all what she has been since the days of Luther—a parasite.

Perhaps there are some German *Hausfraus* to be found who would take kindly to the self-invited, homeless woman, but I do not think there are many married women in other parts of Europe who would do so. Mothers with large families of young children may often be very glad of the presence of a useful lady-help, while the children are small, but that they should welcome into their innermost circle those who have come to stay, and guarantee that they shall stay for ever, is hardly to be expected. There can surely be no permanence about such an arrangement! Many of us, however, shall be able to agree with Dr Müller when he tells his countrymen that the time has come when no kind of work

ought to be looked upon as a disgrace, when a female drone should not be thought more highly of than a male one. Her want of a purpose in life is the old maid's curse. A purpose in life acts like a tonic on the individual constitution; it strengthens both mind and body and, if women would only believe it, it is the surest conservator of youthful charms that has ever yet been discovered. Yet it is estimated that quite half the women of the upper classes of German society are to-day living idle, purposeless lives, and far more women are doing the same in England and America than those who have not looked into the matter can easily believe. A large proportion of these are of course still upon the marriage market, but they cannot remain there long, for in the nature of things they will shortly be crowded out by those younger generations who are already treading on their heels. Let them open their eyes and make sure in which direction they are moving.

CHAPTER VI

THE EVENTUALITY OF WIDOWHOOD

ST GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS, the younger brother of the great St Basil, appears to have taken a very gloomy view of married bliss. "Look!" he said, "Marriage is the general prologue to all the tragedies of Life." And it certainly is, for many women, the prologue to an unprotected and lonely widowhood. A Dutch author wrote a treatise towards the latter part of the eighteenth century proving that Eve was herself intended to be an old maid, and would have been one but for her disobedience; but no one up to the eighteenth century ever made any serious inquiry into ante-diluvian virginity, if we may trust the anonymous writer to whom I am indebted for the above fact.

The same authority has left us an amusing explanation of the phenomena of widows being able to find husbands so much more easily than old maids; he tells us that an elderly gentleman of his acquaintance showed him very clearly how this came about. A widow, it seems, has better nerve than a woman who has never been married; she holds the line more steadily, and when she gets a bite, receives her good luck with unruffled coolness, and shows by her steady hand that she is a first-

rate angler. The old maid, on the contrary, becomes so excited at the first tug that she jerks her rod and lets her victim escape. In other words, the whole story is a confirmation of the adage that nothing succeeds like success. It was under the pseudonym of "A Young Widow," that some one in America wrote a book of sage advice to young girls, entitled, "How to get Married although a Woman."[1] Here is a short extract from it: "There are unmarried women who do a great deal of good in the world. They accept their solitary lot as the Will of the Heavenly Father. But is it His Will? Does He give the heart-longings which He will not satisfy? No. A thousand times, No. That would be tantalizing us. Too often we make mistakes in life, and then declare the consequences to be His Will. It is thus in failing to marry, girls make mistakes in their conduct and remain spinsters. The fault is their own. They do not know how to attract, and so are passed by . . ." Here follows the advice, which I slightly condense: Be as pretty as you can. Be modest, true, industrious, sweet-tempered, kind to your brothers, bright, jolly, sensible, pleasant, and good-natured,—each paragraph urging the practice of one of the above virtues begins with "A man likes" or "Men like." Girls are advised to be sweet-mannered, to smile sweetly, to be generous, gentle, courteous, healthy, hearty, not exacting, tactful, well-read, large-minded, large-hearted, affectionate, forbearing, not self-assertive, not self-reliant, not jealous, not eccentric, not vain

[1] New York, 1895.

—and finally, when the pupil has eventually by following this sage advice, secured a husband, she is "never to let out anything about her husband's shortcomings." Surely a book so full of wisdom must have resulted from the workshop of a masculine brain, especially as it does not contain a word of advice to the kind of man who would make a desirable husband. Let us compare the above with the advice given by Martin Luther to girls about to marry:[1] "*Memores oportet conditionis suae non superbire contra dominos suos, quando recitatis tabellis matrimonialibus intelligere debeant se ancillas esse factas . . . Virum honorare debeat mulier, timere et audire . . . Huic data est subjecta. Ergo subditas esse et reverare virum et honorare, in omnibus obedire . . . Si ergo non licet servo contra dominum . . . contendere, et erigere, ita nec mulieri contra virum.*" I have given the original Latin in order that my readers may have the actual words of the great Reformer before their eyes, and not merely a free translation of them. But to return to the counsel of the young widow,—it is expressly stated, the reader will have observed, that the girl who wishes to marry must not be self-reliant. "The frail and delicate female is supposed to cling round the sturdy husband's form, or to depend from his arm in graceful incapacity, and the spectator is called upon to admire the charming effect of the union—as of the ivy with the oak—forgetful of the terrible moral, namely that (in the case of the trees at any rate) it is

[1] Luther's Works, Ed. Wittenbergae. Published 1558, quoted by Lamy.

really a death-struggle which is going on, in which either the oak must perish, suffocated in the embrace of its partner, or, in order to free the former into anything like healthy development, the ivy must be sacrificed."[1] But it often happens that the ivy-like wife finds herself bereft of the sturdy husband, and of the income his work assured her, before she has enjoyed more than a very few years of wedded bliss; and the more she has leaned upon him, and the more implicitly she has followed Luther's instructions,—the more she afterwards misses his support, especially when money is scarce and there are little ones to be provided for. The conventional ending of story-books —"They got married and lived happily ever after"— has proved, in her case, a delusion and a snare. In the first flush of her widowhood, friends are plentiful and kind, but there are few friends indeed who care to be leaned upon for long, and unless she can turn one of her friends into a husband, she soon finds herself in a very hard world. To "relinquish a pretty home in favour of a sunless room at the back of a dingy boarding-house is not very easy, and to get remunerative work to do is less easy still for the woman who has been trained for nothing but "graceful incapacity." People get tired of buying her embroidered collars and fancy shawls, on which a devoted husband loved to watch her pretty fingers at work, and our widow is compelled to seek a less graceful but more remunerative occupation. At this point she comes sharply and unexpectedly into collision with a number of women who, in somewhat

[1] Edward Carpenter, "Love's Coming of Age," 1902.

similar straits, are trying to do likewise but who have through sheer necessity acquired a power which she is almost sure to lack—the power to stick at a thing and go through with it. A capacity for sustained effort seldom comes naturally to adults who have not been taught to practise it in their youth. "Those who begin to build their houses when they are past thirty, usually die," says La Bruyère, "when the painters are at work, and the window panes are being put into the windows." All thought of work that requires a long and expensive training is out of the question for the poor widow who has little mouths to feed. And such is the state of society to-day that bitter competition must be faced in every department of remunerative work. "If you want to get music pupils," said a kind-hearted lady to one who wished to earn money by the use of her musical gifts, "you must make people think you are actually on the point of starvation, or the pupils will go to some one who seems to need them more than you do." Here, indeed, was a case where pride had to be swallowed; pride, which so often stands cruelly in the way of the woman who, unprepared, starts late in life to earn her living. M. Bertillon, who has been compiling statistics of the deaths that occur in the city of Paris from the all-baffling disease of cancer, has announced that, out of every twenty Parisians, one may be expected to die of cancer. I do not think any statistics would be needed to authorise the statement that out of every twenty girls of the middle classes who marry during the year 1908, one will find herself compelled, before many years have passed, to seek

some means of adding to her income. Yet how many of these girls are preparing themselves for such a contingency? They flatter themselves that they are happily engaged to be married, and that *their* future at any rate is secure. Even those who have begun preparing themselves in some way seem to consider "getting engaged" as a signal for leaving off. The girl who is taking singing lessons sings no more, the hospital nurse leaves the hospital six months before her final examination; the only one who perseveres is the girl who is learning to cook. How often we hear some one say, "Mrs So-and-so has studied the piano under—this or that great man—but now she is married she never opens her piano, though her husband has given her a Bechstein." A German writer tells of a widow who, finding herself left with a large family of children and no money for their education, opened a boarding-house for the day pupils of a well-known boys' school in Strasburg. The poor lady discovered, too late, that there were already more such boarding-houses in the town than the pupils could fill. She knew she must find some other means of making money, but was a long time in despair of finding any suitable employment. At length it happened that a lady living in the next flat to hers was going out to a grand entertainment, and the expected hairdresser failed to appear. Our widow, who chanced to have a knack for arranging hair in artistic coils, good-naturedly offered to take the truant hairdresser's place. She did the business so well that her handiwork met with great approval; and the pleasure she felt at gaining such well-merited

praise brought with it the happy idea that hairdressing, for which she had so decided a gift, was work that she could do. She lost no time in following out the suggestion, set about taking some good lessons from a first-rate hairdresser, and then began to seek for a *clientèle* among the ladies of her neighbourhood. Her efforts met with success, and she soon found that she was able to make the money she required. Her lady-friends, however, were shocked; they soon showed her that she was no more one of their circle, and that, though they wished her well, it would be impossible to treat her any longer as one of themselves: she gradually found herself shut out of the class with which she had been accustomed to mingle,—she had lost caste. Nevertheless she consoled herself with the philosophical reflection, that her gain far exceeded her loss. Her exertions had given her the satisfaction of being able to provide for all her children the education that their father's station demanded. It is not every woman, however, who is so fortunate under similar circumstances as to discover that she has a natural gift that can be turned to so good a use.

It has been truly said that the difficulty of finding suitable ways of earning a livelihood for the women who find themselves suddenly and unpreparedly without a male protector forms a central problem of the woman movement, especially in England and Germany. In France, where women, as we have shown, are remarkable for their shrewd business capacity, widows constantly carry on the business of their departed husbands, and sometimes even with

greater success. Frenchmen visiting England have been struck by the unbusinesslike ways of Englishwomen. This is hardly surprising when we remember that the average middle-class wife in our country prides herself on knowing nothing about her husband's business, and goes so far as to look upon this ignorance as an expression of true womanliness; and her husband likes it because it gives him a pleasing sensation of his own immense intellectual superiority. The average Englishman cannot endure that any of his womenfolk, and least of all his wife, shall come anywhere near equalling him in sagacity. The business aptitude of the Frenchwoman, however, is too valuable an asset to be overlooked by her menfolk, and accordingly they have no hesitation in benefiting by it. In Norway, as also in Sweden and Finland, women share the opinions expressed by Mrs Fitzpatrick,[1] namely that "nature would not have allotted a superiority of understanding to the wife in so many instances, if she had intended they should surrender it to their husbands." The two countries *par excellence* where the average man fears and hates superior intelligence in woman are England and Germany. Only the other day at a tennis club, one of the ladies of a group of young people of both sexes, remarked, as a very pretty girl left the room, and the young men were praising her good looks, "Yes, and she is intelligent as well as pretty, she has just matriculated." Immediately there was a look of unmistakable disgust in the faces of the young men.

[1] See "Tom Jones."

"I felt," said the lady, as she related the incident to me, "as if I had ruined the poor girl's reputation." Woman's duty, according to the recently published opinion of an Edinburgh medical man, is to "attract by her beautiful body and her fine linen."[1] I have in my mind the case of a pretty young woman whose husband, Major B——, has been struck down by paralysis and now depends for the comforts of his sick-room entirely upon her earnings. I am thankful to say she has found a better way of attracting money than that allowed her by this canny Scotchman. The brave young wife has gone into business; she was doing well when I last had news of her.

M. J. Novikow, an anarchistic sociologist, reminds us that Madame Aristide Boucicault superintended and managed the business of the *Magasin du Bon Marché* with rare commercial skill, and he adds that if she had confined herself to the management of one particular section of that great business, lookers-on would have declared that the management of the entire concern was quite above the capabilities of a woman. Even to-day in that very *Bon Marché* the higher posts in the various sections are allotted by preference to men, in spite of the fact that a woman will accept as her remuneration about half the amount demanded by a man. Very little pay indeed is given to the girls who serve in one of the largest shops in Paris, where the manager, according to the Countess Marie de Villermont, has certain days for interviewing girls who present

[1] Dr Stoddart Walker in *Public Opinion*, November 1906.

themselves for employment. "He puts to each girl one brutal question, 'Have you a protector?' and if the poor creature, blushing and indignant, replies in the negative, he turns his back on her and prepares to interview another, saying that he cannot have girls about his shop who are miserable and dying of hunger, and the pay he gives is not enough to support her. Such scenes as this are enacted daily in the beautiful city of Paris, and transactions not a whit more honourable go on in London and Berlin, but they revolt no one, unless indeed some woman suffragist so far forgets her feminine modesty as to mention them in public. Then, truly, there is an uproar, and scandalized society longs to duck the breaker of the peace in a mill-pond. I have actually received a letter suggesting that it would be a good thing if I could "show up" certain unwomanly women of that kind in the present volume! "The man who steals five francs from a poor working girl is looked upon as a thief and a rascal," cries the Countess de Villermont, "but he who steals her honour, to please the passing caprice of a libertine, he who breaks her heart, and throws her into a life of prostitution, he, I say, is received into the best society with a smile of welcome, and when he wishes to marry there are few mothers who would not gladly entrust their daughter to his care." "Anyone," continues this lady, "who looked into the history of all the lost women who loiter on the pavement of our large towns would be shocked to find how enormous is the proportion

of them who have fallen so low through once listening too easily to the tender words of a passer-by who had an hour to throw away."

The Countess Marie de Villermont, whose words I have quoted, is a devout Catholic who has written bravely in defence of her sex, and with a view to the alleviation of the condition of woman. Those feminists who accuse the Catholic Church of despising woman, are, in her opinion, people who are ignorant both of its doctrine and history. The father of the family, it seems to her, must always be its head, "but if," she asks naïvely, "if he is not the most intelligent member of that family, has he the right to believe he is the most intelligent member?" "Unbelievers," she adds, "refuse to give to the woman movement a groundwork of religion, and that is why they have made feminism so dangerous an enemy to social order." She tells us that perfect happiness is not to be expected on this earth, and that those who hope to obtain it by dissolving the family and abolishing the marriage rite, are dreaming of a Utopia. The most perfect laws, and the greatest possible equality of fortune, will not save mortals from violence, murder, disease, and death. Then she changes her theme by pointing out how desperately man still clings to his apparent superiority over woman. And here, at least, she cannot be contradicted, for there are few male scientists in these days who omit to publish theses in support of that superiority. Catholic women in England would do well to clear their minds of the erroneous belief that resignation to her present

position is the first duty of a true Catholic. In the year 1899 Bishop Spalding of Peoria delivered an address at Washington, in connection with Trinity College,—a college founded for the purpose of the higher education of Catholic women in America. He told his audience that the adversaries of the higher intellectual culture for women either did not understand what education was, or they did not believe in its divine efficacy. "The best is best," he said, "whether for man or woman. What interests the one must interest the other, and what benefits the one must benefit the other. Women, not less than men, need strong and open minds, the capacity to form definite ideas and sound judgments, to deduce conclusions logically from premises, to weigh evidence, and to estimate the value of proof . . . they, more than men, probably dwell in the present, are too much dominated by the senses, and a better education, by enabling them to live more in the past and the future, will tranquillize, deepen, and purify their whole being. . . . Who shall hope by futile argument to stay her feet in the way in which the inner voice bids her ascend? . . . The life that is not growing is decaying. . . . Let us not be so dull as to ignore the gifts of woman. Let us not be of those who still doubt whether it is not better that she should be a simpleton; who think that only superficially educated women can make good wives and mothers."

Compare the words of this Catholic bishop with those of Protestant Englishmen who are telling every Englishwoman who shows an interest in the

government of her country, that she is an abnormal phenomenon, a freak of nature, a hermaphrodite. Compare Bishop Spalding's words with the words of those Lutheran scientists in Germany, who are showering pamphlets upon the reading world to prove that the cultivation of woman's natural powers spells degeneration for the race.

CHAPTER VII

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE BETWEEN THE SEXES

THE professional woman is one who has the good fortune to be trained for the work she has to do. Between her and the woman who takes up what work she can find because unforeseen circumstances have compelled her to earn her living, there is a great gulf. The very training of the one has separated her from the other; it has given the professional woman a certain stamina; it has taught her self-control, self-reliance, self-respect: she is conscious of her own value. In many of the liberal professions she is still a pioneer; if she be not the first, she is one of the first to strike out in what, to her sex, is a new direction. Every true pioneer must be prepared to make friends with solitude; consequently the professional woman of our day has her hours of loneliness quite as truly as the old maid of whom we spoke in a previous chapter; but oh! how different! Hers is an enviable solitude, the solitude of the mountaineer, who after a tedious ascent from the sultry valley emerges at last into a clearer and more exhilarating atmosphere. As he leaps from crag to crag he has no time to feel his solitude; it is only when he pauses to take

food and rest that he becomes conscious of the silence that surrounds him. The professional Englishwoman feels her loneliness as soon as time is given her to do so. She is usually surrounded by women with whom she has practically no interests in common. She seldom has a club, out of London, where she can meet friends and discuss mutual interests. Beauty and riches would help to make her path easy, but, if she has neither, she feels her loneliness the more. "One great drawback for professional women who are pioneering," says one of them in a letter to me, "is, that no one cares to advise you, but every one is ready to criticise—and this we feel more than men do. The strain tells on us more quickly than it does on men, and while we feel that strain, we are conscious all the time that our ultimate success will depend greatly on our personal appearance, the very part of us that suffers most."

Professional women are only just beginning to learn that proper and sufficient recreation is as essential to the maintenance of their mental and bodily fitness as it is to the maintenance of bodily fitness in the case of men doing similar work. More money needs to be spent on rest and agreeable change in their case than in the case of women who have less strain to bear. I do not believe that, when this truth has been thoroughly grasped, women will eventually find their personal appearance more injured by ordinary strain than a man does. Female pilots and cab drivers must, by the way, expect their complexions to be somewhat

affected by daily exposure to wind and rain, but even these can console themselves with the fact that a healthy brown complexion is often more pleasing to the eye than the unhealthy, anæmic whiteness of a girl brought up in the lap of idle luxury.

The housing of professional women is another of the problems of the day. I am not now speaking of pioneer women, but of the thousands engaged in professional work in large cities, and whose earnings are insufficient to secure them, singly, all the comforts that women who have husbands to work for them can enjoy. They often find it very difficult to get lodgings anywhere near their work, and when they do find them they have to take what they can get, independently of what they require. Where half a dozen women agree to throw in their lot with one another, each can have a great deal more for her money; the larger the family the more cheaply each member can be catered for; but it is rare to find six, four, or even two professional women who, without any tie of relationship, are willing to make a home together. "I would rather live in a garret, and call it my own, than share a palace with other women," is what we often hear them say. An artist who has had some fifteen years' experience tells me that after trying life in a boarding-house, in furnished apartments, and in ladies' chambers, she had become heartily tired of them all, and finally taken an unfurnished room, provided it with the necessary furniture, and settled down in it as her home. A charwoman cleans her room on certain days of the week and the rest she

does herself. A good restaurant in a neighbouring street provides her with any meal she does not care to cook at home. It is a modest little home enough, but it is her own, and there lies the dignity and charm. Many, however, dread the loneliness of such a life, and so, in spite of its disadvantages, they choose the boarding-house with its prim, schoolmistress-like, domineering, inquisitive manageress, and its petty rules that may not be infringed. They put up with the trial of having to take their meals day after day in the company of uncongenial companions, but they are not happy, nor can they call it home. Co-operative homes on a commercial basis have been started in several countries. There is one in Copenhagen which, I hear, gives great satisfaction. Ladies can have one or two comfortable rooms there for a very low price, and their meals are served to them in their own apartments when and how they like, as from a public restaurant; they can enjoy as much privacy as they wish, for they need never see a face besides that of the maid who answers their bell. We have similar buildings in London on a more sumptuous scale intended chiefly to meet the wants of wealthy bachelors. There is also in these establishments, besides a common kitchen, a suite of public rooms as in an ordinary hotel, so that the inmates can always resort thither when wishing for each other's society. But as a writer on the subject has observed:[1] "The concentration of particular classes is seldom desirable, and perhaps one might go a step further, and urge that the total segregation

[1] See article in *Daily Chronicle*, July 17, 1906.

of the sexes is not the perfection of social and civilised life." Certain it is that one of the great drawbacks to single-blessedness in the present day, for women as well as for men, is that they can rarely enjoy the benefits of social intercourse with persons of the opposite sex. The middle-aged woman deprived of a home of her own has no opportunity of cultivating the acquaintance of men of her own class, and unless her work is of a kind that throws her among them, she may spend years of her life without being able to exchange a thought with a male acquaintance of her own age and station. The lady doctor, the popular actress, and even the hospital nurse, may have a superfluity of male acquaintances, but how many has the middle-aged High School teacher in a country town? It is surprising also to find how many young Englishmen from the country, whose business keeps them in the towns, spend years of their life without being able to associate with women of their own class. Yet everybody knows that the society of good women is the surest means of keeping young fellows in the right path.

There are many clubs for professional women in America, but they are hardly to be recommended; a woman needs to meet others besides those of her own profession, or she will tend to become one-sided. It may be very agreeable to meet with those who have interests identical with our own, but it is perhaps more important that we should meet with people who have quite different interests. The harder the professional woman works the more essential it is that opportunity should be given her in her leisure hours to see

and hear what other cultivated minds are interested in. The woman who has no opportunity of associating with men is almost sure to lack the width of view such association brings with it. American women as a rule have far more freedom in this respect than English, French, or German women, and the whole world readily acknowledges that they are, as women, far more interesting. Some one has said that each sex is most itself in the presence of the other. At any rate they cannot find common grounds of sympathy, and give each other the advantage of seeing things from new points of view, unless some means of friendly intercourse is provided for them. If women who are blessed with homes of their own would think a little more about those who have none, if they would but throw open their drawing-rooms to their friends for a few evenings in the year, and invite not only those who could invite them back, but also those bachelors and maiden ladies who could not, they would be more helpful to society than they can ever be by giving formal dinner parties to married couples of distinction. If instead of those absurd "At Homes" which have made English people the laughing-stock of the world, English hostesses would get up "conversation evenings" for their thinking friends, with a simple cup of coffee for refreshment, they would confer an unspeakable boon upon many a lonely professional woman and brighten many lives. How we are laughed at by foreigners for our senseless "crushes": they have not even novelty to recommend them; they were in full fashion when Madame Avot visited

London in 1817, and that lively Frenchwoman has left us a vivid description of an "At Home" to which she was invited. It was just the same then as now, guests fighting their way, first to the hostess to pay their respects to her, then to the tea-table for a cup of tea, and then back to the hall door. "I was told on one occasion, it would be 'very quiet'," says Madame Avot, "so I went in morning dress, but I found the other ladies in muslin and roses! The drawing-room was small, and crowded to overflowing. The ladies displayed so much jewellery that I think some of their husbands must have been jewellers and afraid to leave their more valuable diamonds in the shop for the evening." My readers will, I hope, pardon me for the digression if I take the opportunity of repeating a few more of the shrewd observations made by this lady. Bazaars had not, it seems, been introduced from England into France at that period, for she says, "I went to a bazaar for the first time in my life. It is a strange English custom. I saw a young man go up to a stall and hand a pretty saleswoman five guineas for a watch-guard — and without bargaining! I noticed that the prettiest lady sold every article she had on her stall, others were less fortunate." She tells further that she had often heard that an Englishman would sell his own wife when he was tired of her, but until she saw it with her own eyes she did not believe it. "It was at Smithfield, a sailor brought his wife and offered her for sale. He had her at the end of a rope. She was bought publicly for

three shillings. The spectators were indignant, the police were informed, but arrived on the spot too late to hinder the sale. The purchaser had undertaken to support the woman and see that she wanted nothing."

But let us return to our subject, "What good can a busy woman possibly derive, or a man either, from an afternoon or evening spent at an "At Home"? Every one hates these functions, and yet we all go when we are invited. They seem to be the easiest and simplest method of showing our friends a little attention, that is, of paying off our little social debts. Once, however, I met a person who had reaped some enjoyment. It was a boy. "I ate five *aspics*," he replied, with a satisfied smile, when I asked if he had a good time. Conversation appears to be a lost art, for no hostess dares to invite friends now-a-days unless she has provided music or recitations to drown remarks about the weather. In the country hostesses are falling back more and more upon the pianola for quieter evenings, and few girls think the piano worth practising unless as a means of livelihood. Yet the pianola is merely an improved barrel organ. In the days of Henry VIII. a gentleman did not consider his education completed if he could not sing at sight and join in a madrigal with the ladies. This, too, appears to be a lost art.

Those who have been long unaccustomed to converse sensibly with their acquaintances of the opposite sex, naturally find it a little difficult at first; the sound of their own voice frightens them and they look wildly round directly there is a pause to see

whether there is not going to be some music to put them out of the misery of not knowing what to say next. Too large a proportion of such persons at a social gathering will have the effect of a chill upon the spirits of the whole party if the hostess is not well on her guard to prevent it. Dr Johnson, whose chief pleasure was conversation, recommended that a table should be placed somewhere in the room with dainty confectionary, that the guests might resort to it at pleasure. Real conversation is that in which the subjects successively under discussion have a real interest for both the parties who are conversing; it precludes therefore all boasting, all one-sided talk about one's self, one's possessions, or one's infirmities. French women of the eighteenth century were famed for their conversational powers. It is said that they vigorously excluded from their salons, all approach to pedantry and disputations, all personalities, and laying-down-of-the-law. They glided smoothly from one subject to another, and every subject that came up received its quotum of attention, more or less, according to the interest it awakened. The mutual interest felt by the speakers in the subject decided when it should be dropped. "La conversation glisse, monte, descend, court et revient; la rapidité lui donne le trait, la précision la mène a l'élégance."[1] Something of their conversational art has been preserved for us in the letters of eighteenth-century women. We see, too, that they were great readers of good literature. They lived in daily and familiar communion with the great thinkers of the past, and,

[1] C. and G. Goncourt, "La femme au dix-huitième Siècle," 1896.

what is very noticeable, they read and encouraged the good literature of their own day. We are told that there was not a genius in art or literature in the eighteenth century who did not feel it worth his while to aim at giving satisfaction to the great ladies of his country. Those women formed independent judgment on the productions of their contemporaries; they did not wait to have their opinions prepared for them by newspaper critics. From 1700 to 1789 woman was the moving power of literature and art, "she seemed," says Goncourt, "*une puissance d'ordre superieuse, la reine des pensées de la France.*" In those days every lady had her own library of books and lived in their atmosphere, extracting from them both pleasure and support. History, philosophy, science, all were well represented on their bookshelves, and along with these were to be found the most popular works of the day, and the latest novels. Lending libraries had not yet come into existence.

Those who in the twentieth century peruse three new novels a day can naturally find very little to say about them when they need a subject for conversation at dinner parties. "Have you read 'The Green Cat'?" says the gentleman as he is taking the lady in to dinner. "Yes," she replies, delighted and glowing with satisfaction at being able to answer truthfully in the affirmative. "Yes, I have read 'The Green Cat.'" After this another topic has to be hunted up, for "The Green Cat" is exhausted. But cultivated men and women who are workers, do not read three novels a day, and the books they

do read suggest many thoughts which, if only given a little air, would prove valuable and helpful to others as well as to themselves. It has been truly said that conversation clears up ideas, and it certainly doubles and trebles them. English people who have resided abroad for a time, miss, on their return home, one thing in particular, and that is—sensible conversation. "No one in England seems to have any thoughts in his head beyond motors, and how to do something more cheaply than somebody else did it," remarked a newspaper correspondent when he returned from the Continent for a holiday in 1906. "I wouldn't live in England again for worlds. I cannot endure the narrowness." The fact is, that English people have lost the habit, if they ever had it, of freely exchanging their ideas with one another. They read little, and the thoughts that are suggested by their reading they keep to themselves. When Madame Chateaubriand was the guest of the Jouberts they had many enjoyable conversations in which each took part "with body and soul," as Joubert afterwards expressed it, from the bottom of their hearts and their intelligence. "How different," he exclaims, "from those conversations where there is no freedom, no gaiety, no spreading out of the imagination, no play; where there is neither movement nor repose, neither distraction nor relief, neither scattering nor gathering; in fact, where there is nothing given and nothing received, and where there is no time for spiritual commerce."[1]

A great deal is being said about the absurdity of

[1] Paléologue, "Profils de Femmes."

expecting married couples not to tire of one another's company. We are told about the "stuffiness and narrowness, moral and intellectual," of the middle-class married life, of the "sharpness of the line which society draws round the pair, and the kind of fatal snap-of-the-lock with which marriage suddenly cuts them off from the world.[1] We are told of the horrible boredom which ensues when there is no escape from a daily tête-a-tête, and of the disapproval shown by the world when for their own pleasure, they agree to spend a day apart." It certainly does seem absurd to expect two people, however devoted they may be to one another, to confine themselves entirely to one another's company. But who does expect this? It is only their selfish indolence which leads them to do it. Let them think and work a little for the good of their own generation. Let every couple who have a home feel it their privilege to open their doors to a few of their acquaintances who have none, and they will then have less cause to weary of one another's company. Let town families cultivate a little of the heartiness and friendly unostentatious hospitality that makes colonial life so delightful, and they themselves will be those who reap the greatest gain. It is that accursed ambition to keep up with other people, to do things as others do, even when you cannot afford it, that narrows people's lives, and makes them selfish and fills them with *ennui*, and finally, with hatred of one another's company. If we looked into the matter

[1] Ed. Carpenter.

closely enough we should find that half the divorce cases we hear about are traceable to simple boredom, an evil which can far more safely be remedied in the way we have suggested than by any meddling with our marriage laws. Jealousy between married people is, of course, a very unsociable quality, and it is looked upon as the darling sin of womankind. "If woman," says Weiniger, "had a sense of her personal value and the will to defend it against all external attacks, she could not be jealous. Jealousy depends on failure to recognise the rights of others."

That man cannot be a real friend to woman unless he be related to her, is surely an assumption equally degrading to both sexes. But we are too inclined to hold fast to other people's views without examining them. We forget that it is quite as dangerous to borrow opinions as to borrow money.[1] An American girl, who spent a few days with English friends when on a visit to this country, told me that the mother of the family was incensed with her for refusing an offer of marriage made her by the son. "Why, if you were not going to accept him, did you let him escort you to church on Sunday evening?" she cried bristling with indignation; "no English girl would do such a thing." "I was extremely sorry," added the young lady in telling me the story, "but I never had any idea that so simple an act on my part could ever be interpreted so seriously."

When Athens was at its best, the refined and

[1] See Bishop Westcott's "Lessons from Work."

cultured Greeks found their chief relaxation and pleasure in the society of courtesans, other women being deprived of the advantage of improving their minds:[1] the respectable woman in those days was compelled to be a comparative fool. Happily it is no longer necessary for the one sex to remain in a state of mental subordination to the other:—

> "Poor thing of usages, coerced, compelled,
> A victim oft when wrong, a martyr oft when right."

In these days there is no lack of educated and cultivated women, but they are less often to be found among the wealthy than among the poorer classes of society. These may be "ladies born" indeed, but oftener than not they are unable, even by their own professional work, to make themselves a home, and that is why in their case rational intercourse with the other sex is often quite out of the question in the present state of society. In 1844, a lady wrote, "Women can scarcely be blind to the subtle distinction which is made in the conversation between men among themselves, and among men when in their society—to the absence of all, where women are present, that is either dignified or solid." And she added, "Does a woman require personal compliment at every turn?" What, I wonder, would this lady think of society in 1907? In her day there were, in England at least, very few cultured women with whom a man could talk as with one who was mentally his equal. Such is not the case to-day,

[1] See "Can Woman Regenerate Society," 1844.

yet Englishmen complain that the difficulty of obtaining social intercourse with such women is as great as ever it was. Let us look at a middle-class dinner party of our own day. Small nothings and empty chit-chat carry us through the courses, and then the ladies retire to the drawing-room to discuss the local chimney sweep —or the difficulty of obtaining honest butlers; the gentlemen get interested in some political topic as they sip their wine, and elect to finish the evening in the hall that they may continue their political discussion, instead of returning to the drawing-room to "make conversation" with the ladies. It is still an unwritten law of English middle-class society that for a lady to show a real interest in politics is unlady-like, unfeminine, in fact, a sign of the new woman, and therefore to be avoided at any cost. A Norwegian lady who spent a winter in India told me on her return that the utter absence of intellectual conversation there made her feel it a relief to get away. "Ah," said a lady to whom I repeated this, "I have lived in India a good deal, and I know that what your Norwegian friend says is quite true of all conversation between the sexes, but if she had only got the ladies alone, or the men alone, she would have found plenty of intellectual conversation. Englishwomen in India are positively afraid of showing any sign of intellectuality in the presence of the other sex. A girl out there once said to me: 'My sister, who is coming out in the next steamer, is a

B.A., but I tell you this in strict confidence. You must promise not to damage her by letting it get known.'" Matters are very much the same in Germany, where the sexes seem to feel it only proper that they should have no intellectual interests in common. They separate after every dinner party as if they were the builders of the tower of Babel, "afflicted with a confusion of tongues."[1] That woman should be an intellectual complement to man, is still looked upon as impossible. But even Germany is waking up. "Personal intercourse between men and women," writes Dr Müller, "has of course its difficulties and dangers. But what is there worth striving for that is not beset with dangers? What heights can we reach without the conquest of difficulties? Is not the married state sufficiently beset with obstacles to be overcome? Yet, though it causes the shipwreck of so many lives, it is still entered into with the same bright hopes and enthusiasm. The fondest parents do not attempt to hold their children back from the perilous step. Nay, they prepare them for it as for a festival. Let us then be brave, and face the dangers that may present themselves. We must look them fearlessly in the eye before we can hope to conquer them. Let us raise the personal intercourse of the sexes to its rightful place, and restore its human dignity."

Before this task can be satisfactorily accomplished,

[1] H. Lange, "Intellectuelle Grenzlinien zwischen Mann und Frau."

the art of flirtation will have to be discountenanced. It is an art which owes its birth to English soil, and all the other countries that encourage it have received it from us, and adopted the English word for it. Max O'Rell wrote, in 1885, that such a thing as flirtation did not exist in France. He called it an essentially English pastime. "*En France on ne flirte pas, on est plus sérieux que cela en affaires d'amour.*" He also added that English girls often wrote in Confession Albums that flirting was their favourite amusement, whereas, "Une femme qui flirterait en France passerait pour inconséquente voir même lègére." Max O'Rell objected to the undignified way young English ladies had of sitting upon foot-stools instead of chairs. Although he wrote thus, more than twenty years ago, flirtation is, it cannot be denied, still one of the most serious drawbacks to rational conversation between the sexes. I find it seriously stated in the *Almanach Femininste* published in Paris in 1900 that, in England, "*le flirt est parfaitement admis et consacré par l'usage quotidien.*" Alas! in the present state of our upper classes of society a man knows that, although he can flirt openly with any girl who pleases him, he cannot converse rationally with her on two consecutive occasions without the risk of serious complications. How, under these circumstances, can men and women of refined feeling frankly exchange ideas, or attempt to cultivate each other's acquaintance with any other view than that of marriage? It has been said that the gravest fault in Thackeray's novels, as in his manners, was the impression he gave

that he had never known a good and sensible woman. There are many Englishmen in our day, too, whose acquaintance with such women is painfully limited by our senseless customs and our idiotic prudery.

CHAPTER VIII

CLUBS AND TRADE UNIONS

"TO drive better than his own coachman is, in the eyes of the young Englishman, a veritable glory," wrote Madame Avot nearly a hundred years ago. "Englishmen," she added, "mix very little with ladies outside their own families, they are consequently awkward and unamiable in their presence. Men who live so much among themselves cannot be expected to excel in politeness." It is exactly thus with the professional and working women of our country, they are awkward and unamiable in the society of men, because they live so much among themselves. Women's Clubs and Women's Unions are the order of the day. The Russian woman, on the contrary, who is universally acknowledged to be more of the comrade and "chum" of her menfolk than any other woman in the world, does not strive in any way for the segregation of her sex. "Have you a Russian Girl's Club in Paris?" I asked of one of the hundreds of Russian girls who are studying there. "Not we," was the smiling reply. Russian men and women like each other's society too much to care for separate institutions of that sort: we like, not only to study side by side, but to enjoy each other's

society when our work is over. I know that is where we differ from English and German girls, who are always arranging themselves in an opposite camp as though man were a rival to be emulated, rather than a brother and friend." It is the same in every class of the Russian Empire. Trades Unions for women will never prosper in Russia. In England, however, they are often held out as women's one hope of salvation. "There is no argument for the organisation of men which does not apply to that of woman also," writes Miss Mona Wilson. "It is indeed essential for the interests of both sexes that women should combine as well as men. In trades where the men only are organised the tendency is for the woman to undersell the men, and replace them in any work which can be done by woman. . . . The importance of the trade union for woman from an educational point of view can scarcely be exaggerated. It supplies an element which is usually completely wanting in the life of a working woman, by developing in her a capacity for public spirit, and by giving her wider interests." Surely all these advantages could be far more easily obtained by admitting women to the trade unions of the men? There may of course be some preliminary difficulties in the way of admitting women to the membership of clubs and unions where the accommodation has been provided with a view to the comfort of men only. Women are refused as Fellows of the Royal Geographical Society, for instance, not because they cannot travel and explore, but because the present premises are too

small to allow of satisfactory accommodation for them; and this is probably the case with many other societies both for professional men and for artisans. Still it is a difficulty that could be got over by the expenditure of a little time and money, perhaps less time and money than are now being lavished upon separate associations and clubs for women.

Many persons have expressed the opinion that there is no reason why working women should not attain to a very fair degree of economic independence through such institutions as trade unions for the unmarried. But are the present trade unions for men so very desirable as to justify women in wishing so eagerly to form unions for themselves after the same model? Do they tend to strengthen or to weaken individual independence? Do they tend to the cultivation of individual initiative? The man who belongs to a trade union allows his activity to be entirely directed by that union; he may not, as a painter for instance, do anything but paint; he may not even practise carpentering in his off-time. Trade unions forbid their men to go to clubs in the evening and learn fresh kinds of handiwork: they tell the men's employers (always of course in the interests of the men) that, if it is good for the men to attend industrial clubs, they must be allowed to do so during their working hours; but this the employers are, oftener than not, obliged to refuse, for the simple reason that they cannot afford to pay for work that is not done. The consequence is that the man whose trade is house-painting has

to pass the winter months in absolute idleness. But for his belonging to a trade union, he might spend that time both usefully and profitably. These syndicates are, as an observant French writer has said, a result of people preferring servitude to isolation; *they permit the individual to reduce his efforts to a minimum.*[1] "It must be admitted," says an English divine,[2] "that they naturally tend to limit enterprise, to discourage new inventions, to check vigorous ability, to acquiesce in a minimum standard of efficiency. In large works they separate employers and employed. They confine their attentions to the good of a class, and members of a trade union are often strangely ignorant of the general conditions of their trade." It is remarkable that liberty-loving Englishmen should be so ready to submit to the anonymous tyranny of the trade union. Goldsmith's Chinaman might well be astonished to hear an English prisoner discoursing through the bars of his prison on the glories of freedom, with a porter who was bowed nearly double by the burden on his back!

The employer of a number of men in a London suburb was for years in the habit of keeping a job for a man if he fell ill, and also of paying more highly for extra jobs than for regular work, but now that his men have joined a trade union he must pay, for all work, a regular wage, so that many of his men earn considerably less than before. They, on their side, may now leave his employ at two days' notice. Yet,

[1] Le Bon, "Psychologie du Socialisme," 1906.
[2] Bishop Wescott. Lecture on Trade Unions.

the other day, when he discharged several men at two days' notice, they thought it unjust, and complained that he had never treated his employees like that before; to which he replied that, now that they were working for him on trade union lines, he could not do otherwise than employ them on trade union lines.

The history of women's clubs would, if carefully studied, give us perhaps the best assistance in discovering what bent feminine activities in England and America are likely to take in the near future.[1] Clubs for women have existed in America for the last thirty-five years. The earliest were the "New England Club" at Boston, and the famous "Sororis Club" at New York. To-day these institutions may be counted by the hundred, and form a widespread federation. Madame Bentzon, who was present at a brilliant debate in New York, exclaimed with enthusiasm that if only men were also admitted to their membership they would rival the famous Salons of France. To which an American lady replied with a flash in her eye, "*Nous tenons à briller pour notre propre compte!*" No one doubts the usefulness of the woman's club, but for all that we should not shut our eyes to its abuse. Among the wealthy in America, women's clubs are tolerated as a fad rather than as a necessity, they are often very luxurious, and select. Many private clubs exist in the shopping districts and are maintained for the convenience and independence of ladies when engaged in shopping. It is quite common for a New

[1] See Madame Bentzon, "Questions Americaines."

York girl who wishes to purchase a new costume to spend a whole morning in "pricing" articles likely to suit her, before she attempts to make her purchase, and a club in the neighbourhood of her exertions is often a great boon.

A friend writing from New York on the subject of clubs, says, "Women are there lost to male view, as in the quicksands, they reappear after a time as new creations of millinery and costume,—clubs being the emporium of exchange; second-hand theatre articles of Parisian or London manufacture here change owners. The women who emerge after an interval are undoubtedly the same, though their habiliments differ — for better or for worse; opinions on this point vary also among the male critics, when their indifference is overcome."

To the unmarried professional woman whose only home is a garret, to which she cannot possibly invite her friends, the club is a boon indeed; it enables her to return in a pleasant way the hospitality shown her by others; it gives her an opportunity of making new friends, and opens to her many avenues of pleasure from which her solitary and isolated life would otherwise keep her aloof. Many of the London clubs have comfortable and prettily furnished bedrooms, which members can make use of for themselves and their friends, at a price far below that charged by an hotel. In America, smoking for women is still looked askance at in most circles, except in those frequented by Russian women, but in England it is becoming more and more a recognised

custom in certain sets. Our women's clubs have their smoking-rooms, and in most of them smoking is permitted after dinner in the dining-room. It is difficult to say whether the practice is more popular among professional or society women. A well-known Swiss doctor, who has given particular attention to the feminine constitution, has kindly sent me his views on smoking for women. "In general," he says, "smoking weakens the heart, and affects the memory, and is injurious to the nervous system. A great smoker may live a long life, but his children will have less power of endurance. It often happens that children of inveterate smokers suffer from weakness of the stomach; if women smoke as well as men, the effect on their children is likely to become yet more disastrous." In Russia smoking does not, however, seem to have done much harm to the women or to their children, yet the Russian woman is quite as much at home with a cigarette as her husband and brother. There are very few professional women in Russia who do not smoke. The medical woman and the school teacher smoke quite as much as those who have no regular occupation. I have seen a Russian lady of means put a cigarette into her mouth as she sauntered into a fashionable shop for the purchase of ribbons and laces. The very woman who takes the greatest care of her appearance and wishes to enhance in every possible way her feminine charms is often the one most attached to smoking. I do not say, however, that even in Russia there are not to be found ladies who still cherish the old English

ideas with regard to the propriety of this pastime for women.

It has been said that, like half the things the modern Englishwoman does, her belonging to a club is in the nature of a protest. "Her club, to the yellow and unwholesome eye of a man used to clubs, is no club at all. She is not enough of an animal to insist upon good eating and drinking. She is not clubable, for she cannot loaf, and on the other hand she cannot accept her fellow members in a large and tolerant spirit. Her club is a convenience, not a religion. The solid, ample base of temperamental laziness and comfort-seeking which underlies men's clubs is utterly wanting in the thing called a ladies' club. Yet she would have us think that her club means to her something of what a man's means to him. . . . The ordinary Frenchman seems always to have felt by instinct that the association of women in his affairs, public and private, on an equal but distant footing, made, in the end, for sanity and stability. But in England the masculine temperament has never stood in any need of strengthening on the side of conservatism, carefully, continually, and for the most part brutally, we have kept women out of things; we have educated them as social and political incapables. French women take themselves as an order of beings different from men, so that the freedoms they seek are not a mimicry of manhood, even if they pursue power, it is through men, not against them."[1] The Russian woman, we may here

[1] See article in *The Outlook*, April 14, 1906, on the occasion of M. Cambon's Address at the Lyceum Club.

observe, pursues power neither through man nor against him, but as his comrade and in his company.

M. Cambon told the ladies of the Lyceum Club that the Frenchwoman's husband consults her on everything, and nearly always follows her advice; and he told them many other things that might well raise a feeling of envy in the breast of a married Englishwoman, but the irony of it all lay in the fact that his audience was composed almost entirely of unmarried professional women. "He forgot," said one of his listeners, with a bitter curl of her lip, as she recounted it all to me, "that very few of us had homes, and fewer still had husbands." He forgot also, it is clear, when he indicated that his countrywomen did not care for clubs, that some at least of the women of France were miserable, despised, and down-trodden old maids, who had never been asked whether they would like to become members of a club or not! But there must have been a touch of sarcasm in his voice when he concluded by remarking that English ladies seemed to spend their lives in organising all sorts of works, charitable and otherwise. "La Philanthropie peut, comme tout autre emploi de notre activité, devenir affaire de mode," was a remark made by one of his own countrymen. Clubs, committees, unions and associations are certainly in fashion to-day as far as Anglo-Saxon womanhood is concerned. With hundreds of women the running of them takes the place of any other profession; it is to many women their chief source of pleasure in life, a substitute for the home interests and amusements which are so often lacking. But if M. Cambon had

but glanced at the most recent statistics of his own country he would have seen that while five hundred thousand French women live on their incomes and their estates, the number of those who live by their profession is given at 5,381,069.[1] Even the wives and mothers of the French working and middle classes are compelled by economic necessity to seek employment outside their homes, and it naturally follows that they wish to be paid the true value of their work, and fail to see the justice of their employers paying them only one-third as much as a man would get for work that is equal to a man's in quantity as well as quality. French feminism, in the opinion of M. Turgeon, was born, not of a wish for the equality of the sexes, but of an impoverishment of the home, through economic causes.

Denmark has as yet no clubs for women, but women students at the Copenhagen University are allowed to join the men's Conservative and Liberal Clubs. Some enterprising lady tried to start a club for women, but it came to nothing, as the women all preferred being members of men's clubs, and felt no need for one for themselves exclusively. Leaders of women's rights in Denmark do not find it an easy matter to gain the support of University women. The suffragist is looked upon rather as a woman who is inclined to neglect her appearance, and as one who scorns to turn her attention to the frivolities of dress. The average Danish girl is still very feminine and retiring. One of them, who is an M.A. of Copen-

[1] See Turgeon, "Le Féminisme Français."

hagen University, remarked to me that Danish women rarely speak in public, and that she felt her heart in her mouth whenever a lady rose to speak. There are no women's clubs in Norway, partly because the Norwegians are too poor; they find it excessively difficult to get sufficient money together for any enterprise of that nature, but they have women's book societies and reading rooms. By the word "club" one usually means a more or less luxuriously furnished centre, and this always costs money to begin with, even if it eventually supports itself. In Finland, however, there are many clubs exclusively for women, those in the country being affiliated with those in the large towns, as is the case in America. There are the "*Kvinnosaksforbundet Unionen*" and the "*Deskussions Klubben*" to which women only are admitted. In the "Constitutional Club" at Helsingfors both men and women take part in the political discussions. There are also numerous "Philanthropic Clubs," as they are called, as well as "Women's Temperance Associations." In addition to all these there are social clubs for women of the working class. The women of Finland are much more democratic than the women of Sweden. They published some years ago a substantial work, in three great volumes, on the subject of the amelioration of the position of women: "Reformaibet till forbattrande of Kvinnans Stallning." It exists at present only in the Finnish and Swedish languages.

Swedish womanhood is split up into as many varieties as that of America; every variety is

to be found in the large towns. Ladies of the highest social class form themselves into associations for philanthropic and charitable purposes. Their Beehive Clubs for facilitating the sale of fancy-work done by "decayed ladies," as we call them in England, are on a truly imposing scale. There is still a strong feeling among the Swedish *bourgeoisie* that the woman who steps out of the privacy of her home to undergo a University education, or to engage in any intellectual or technical work, is running the risk of losing caste, consequently there are thousands of Swedish women who, finding they must work for money, prefer to spend their days over an embroidery frame at home to going forth to more public employment. Nowhere in the world have I seen more exquisite results from devotion to the needle than those produced by the industry and taste of the ladies of Sweden: it is hardly necessary to add that this section of Swedish womanhood is in no way attracted by the charm of debating clubs and political associations.

It is, however, among a section of the *haute bourgeoisie* of Sweden that we find some of the most "advanced" ideas on the women problem that human lips have ever dared to put into words. Here, too, are political associations for women, and societies of every kind, if not actually clubs in our sense of the word. The agitators of this section draw their adherents mostly from the class immediately below their own, such as school-teachers and telephone workers. I remember that when the

director of the Central Telephone Office in Stockholm was conducting me through that most interesting building, and showing me the endless rows of young women at their work, he pointed out that these girls were almost without exception girls of bourgeois families who had their parents' homes to live in, and only needed to earn a small salary sufficient for their dress and amusement. "No girl who had to depend entirely on her salary for her living could afford to work here," he added, "the pay would not be anything like sufficient." These girls work daily from nine in the morning till four in the afternoon, after which their time is their own. They are mostly the daughters of clergymen, army officers, and people of a similar rank. It is easy to understand what a gap must exist between these girls and those of the same social standing who from some cause or another are thrown entirely upon their own resources, not only a gap, but also a bitter feeling very similar to that which exists between the two classes in England. "Women should study the ethics of wage-earning," cried an English professional woman indignantly when I broached the subject to her. "Every woman who will do work for a salary lower than the value of the work, simply because she is independent of it, is stealing the bread from the mouths of her sisters who are less favourably situated."

The telephone was introduced into Sweden in the early eighties of the nineteenth century by a private company. The State has now the monopoly

of all the provincial telephone lines except one, but it has as a rival in the huge private company with some 32,000 subscribers on its list. With the exception of the manager and a few engineers the employees are all women. Of late the work has begun to pass out off the hands of the class of girls I found at work there, into those of girls of a lower and less educated class. There are no married women employed on the telephone.[1]

Charitable Clubs for girls of the lower classes are to be found in almost all civilized countries, and there is no doubt that they do an immense deal of good; but these, like trade unions, have one serious drawback, they bolster up the individual with outside support, they encourage a feeling of dependence and subjection which is fatal to all initiative and self-improvement from within. A girl who has been strengthened and improved from without is more often than not like an empty sack which is being held up to be filled; the moment the persons who are holding it up by its brim let it go it collapses into a heap. It has often occurred to me that the women who benefit most by these institutions are the unemployed single ladies and widows of means who give so much time to their supervision, for it at least furnishes them with an outlet for their natural energy which they would not otherwise have. A clergyman who died recently has left his middle-aged widow with absolutely nothing to do; all the philanthropic work with which she was engaged during his lifetime has gone to the wife of the new

[1] See Wikmark, "Die Frauenfrage," 1905.

clergyman. This good lady has tried to get employment by visiting the patients of private nursing homes and reading the Bible to them, but that has been put a stop to by at least one matron on account of her gossiping propensities. One great attraction of philanthropy all over the world, lies, like that of art needlework in Sweden, in the fact that it is an occupation which does not involve loss of caste.

The bestowal of charity, in whatever form, has nearly always a lowering effect on the receiver. What, for instance, is more humiliating to a democratic-spirited girl than the treatment she receives in a governesses' home?[1] Let the reader but question a few self-respecting women who have by force of circumstances been compelled to partake of this kind of assistance; let him ask them how they felt as they retired each night to their narrow cubicles overshadowed by the domineering presence of an inquisitive lady superintendent. I know of one such home where the lady in charge used to make a nightly tour of inspection among the cubicles and impress a kiss on the cheek of each submissive inmate. The principal reason why girls flock to such philanthropic institutions is that they can there receive a few weeks' board and lodging for a shilling or so a week less than elsewhere. An English governess whom I met in Russia told me that although her father had in his lifetime

[1] The home for English governesses in a neighbouring capital has been described to me by an outsider as "the most pitiful sight in the world."

been a well-known literary man, she had now no home on earth; her married brother in England, she said, had, it was true, offered her a home with him at thirty shillings a week, but she had found she could board more cheaply elsewhere. There are many thousands in her position.

CHAPTER IX

WOMAN AND CHRISTIANITY

IN the year 1880 a well-known English clergyman preached a sermon on the subject of "Woman," at Philadelphia. He told his hearers that women "can never by any power of education arrive at the same mental status as that enjoyed by men," and then proceeded as follows: "Wifehood is the crowning glory of a woman. In it she is bound for all time. To her husband she owes the duty of unqualified obedience. There is no crime which a man can commit which justifies her in leaving him, or applying for that monstrous thing—divorce. It is her duty to subject herself to him always, and no crime that he can commit can justify her lack of obedience." It is quite possible that this sermon, which continued to its close in the same strain, had often been preached to English congregations without evoking a single protest, for it contained nothing new or striking for the average English mind. But the word now fell on very different soil. The women of America were pained, thunderstruck, and indignant. "Is this the sort of teaching that Englishwomen imbibe?" they exclaimed. "Why! According to the Rev. Knox Little, woman possesses no responsi-

bility; she is deprived of conscience, of intelligent thought, of self-respect; and is simply an appendage to man—a thing!"[1] But, after all, this Anglican clergyman was only expounding the doctrine of Martin Luther, the doctrine meekly accepted by all the Protestant women of England.

Yet at that very time there was, in Germany, the most Lutheran of all Lutheran countries, a small cloud of rebellion arising—a cloud no bigger than a man's hand. German Socialism had discovered that all was not well with the German woman: it had also discovered that its own most diplomatic course would be to gain over the German woman. A book on Woman[2] was secretly published, and spread among the lower classes of society throughout the length and breadth of the Fatherland. It told the working woman that she too had a right to economic independence; it asked her to join the Socialists in their endeavour to transform society, and bring about a state of things in which all the means of production would be the property of the community, and in which society would recognise the full equality of all, without distinction of sex.

Socialism proclaimed open war against prostitution,

[1] See "History of Woman's Suffrage in America."

[2] Bebel, "Die Frau und Socialismus." This book has been translated into eleven languages, and had gone through twenty-five editions before the year 1896. See also Russell, "The Woman Question in Germany." The more recent editions bear testimony to the fact that Herr Bebel's views on the subject of woman's destiny have been considerably modified since the first appearance of the work in 1877. Its statistics are not, we may add, altogether reliable; yet there is no doubt but that it has done an immense amount of good.

and promised the poor half-starved German girl of the fourth class that she should become as productively useful as man, and thus be placed above every degrading demand. Is it surprising that thousands of wretched women listened to the good tidings and became Socialists? In the year 1877 socialist associations for working women were started in various parts of Germany, just three years before the Rev. Knox Little preached at Philadelphia the sermon above referred to. Socialism spoke also to the women of the *bourgeoisie*. "Marriage," it said, "shall no longer represent half the sexual life of the *bourgeoisie*, and prostitution the other." Socialism spoke to the despised old maid. "Social proscription and contempt are now your portion; your life is relatively the saddest among all your companions in distress. Social prejudice forces you to abstain from the very occupations by which the amelioration of your lot can be made possible." Socialism spoke to the bourgeois mother: "What is the use of teaching your sons virtue and morality while the State is telling them that immorality is necessary? The State confronts the young man long before he has reached mental maturity with women stamped by government as an article of trade for his passions to trifle with." And to all women Socialism said: "If you had a word to say in the legislature of the country, you would bring about many reforms."

Socialism had seen where woman's shoe pinched her, and its promises of relief were gratefully

which bears corrections in the writer's own handwriting.

"Why keep woman in ignorance under the name of innocence?"

"That mind will ever be unstable that has only prejudice to rest on."

"It is a gross insult to advise women to become gentle domestic brutes."

"It is unphilosophic of men to keep women in a state of childhood."

"In every age there has been a stream of popular opinion carrying all before it."

"That only is virtue which results from reason."

"The regal homage women receive is intoxicating; they must return to nature."

"All writers have helped to make women artificial."

"The cultivation of women's understanding is always subordinate to some corporeal accomplishment; they are enervated by confinement; they have no emulation to help their faculties; they dwell on effects without tracing them back to their causes."

"Depth of understanding is as rare among the army as among women. Officers love dancing, crowded rooms, etc. Like the fair sex, the business of their lives is gallantry."

"Tyrants and sensualists are right when they endeavour to keep women in the dark; the former only want slaves, the latter, playthings."

"Woman's conduct should be founded on the

same principles, and have the same aims as men's."

"To endeavour to reason love out of the world would be to out-Quixote Cervantes; but love should not be allowed to dethrone superior powers."

"Does marriage eradicate habitude? Women taught only to please will try it on other men as well as their husbands."

"Fondness for dress is not natural to women, it arises from love of power."

"Women are entirely dependent on the senses for enjoyment and employment."

"The lordly caresses of a protector will not gratify a noble mind; fondness is a poor substitute for friendship."

"Why must woman's mind be tainted with coquettish arts to gratify the sensualist, and prevent love from subsiding into friendship?"

"A wise woman will not model her soul to suit the frailties of her husband, but to bear with them."

"How will women exist when there is no giving in marriage?"

"Women are made to be loved; they must not aim at respect lest they be hurled out of society as masculine."

"Do passive, indolent women make the best wives?"

"If the inferiority of women is natural, men have increased it till women have sunk almost below the standard of rational creatures. . . . Let their faculties unfold."

"Love and esteem are very distinct things."

"Woman is the only flaw in nature."

"Woman's feebleness of mind and body arises from her education. . . . If she is naturally weaker than man, why try to make her more so . . . her dependence is called natural."

"Few men have strength enough to rise above the surrounding atmosphere. Why should girls be expected to rise above dolls, dress and gossip?"

"Women glory in their subjection."

"Is the dignity of woman's soul as disputable as that of animals?"

"As women submit without reason, they will be kind or cruel without reason."

"Must woman take reason second-hand? How can her religion be worth anything, if it is only that of another?"

"Is woman always to take things on trust?"

"The present idea of woman robs the whole sex of its dignity."

"Fear of departure from a supposed sexual character has made even women of superior sense adopt the same sentiments as men."

"Littleness would not degrade woman's character if political and moral subjects were open to them."

"How can women be just or generous when they are the slaves of prejudice?"

"Novel reading is acquiring knowledge from a muddy source."

"Intellect will always govern."

I leave it to my readers to decide for themselves as to how many of the ideas contained in

these sentences are obsolete. It is more than a hundred years since they were penned. For some seventy years after its publication this trumpet-call to the world's womanhood was hushed, at any-rate the book sank into oblivion and the weapon of ridicule effectually silenced the few English-women who made signs of answering to it.

Few Englishwomen, indeed, have ever been able to withstand ridicule, and "the pretty, soft creatures that are so often to be found in the female sex, and that class of men who believe that they could not exist without such pretty, soft creatures to resort to were in arms against the author of so heretical and blasphemous a doctrine."[1] What courage, indeed, would any woman have needed, to be able to face in England during the first half of the eighteenth century the epithets—ridiculous! heretical! blasphemous! No Protestant woman had that courage, and certainly no Protestant man. The Bible was at that time being used as a pretext for holding woman down, and the greater her piety, the more submissive was her subjection. Hannah More, who refused to open Mary Wollstonecraft's book, said: "There is perhaps no animal so much indebted to subordination for its good behaviour as woman;"[2] while Horace Walpole talked about "that hyena in petticoats."

Half a century after the publication of "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman," England's womanhood was again startled out of its lethargy. This time the trumpet-blast came from a man: John Stuart

[1] Godwin. [2] E. R. Clough, Ph.D., "Mary Wollstonecraft," 1898.

Mill published his "Subjection of Woman." He was one who had been brought up in Christian England, but in an atheistic home. Those who will take the trouble to glance at his autobiography will see that John Stuart Mill's childhood was passed in as absolute an ignorance of the Bible, or indeed of any religious teaching, as if he had grown up among heathens. While woman, then, lay "buried under a couple of Pauline texts," two free-thinkers, Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill, untrammelled by the literal interpretation of these texts, had come to her rescue in England, just as a few years later, first Hippel, and then some free-thinking socialists, came to her rescue in Germany. To all who believed in the verbal inspiration of the Old and New Testaments, it appeared, as it still does to thousands of good men and women in England, a sacrilege to talk of altering her subordinate position towards man and society. It was because certain texts from the Old and New Testaments were so constantly being employed to hedge women round in America, that some of the more energetic of them eventually conceived the novel idea of bringing out a "Woman's Bible," with a special commentary on the texts in question. "Sir," cried T. W. Palmer, in a speech before the Senate in 1885, "my reverence for the grandest of all compilations, human or divine, compels me to protest against its being cast into the street as a barricade against every moral, political and social reform."[1] Protestantism has

[1] See "History of Woman's Suffrage," vol. iv.

long ceased to bar the way to woman's progress in America, and so indeed has Catholicism, but Rationalists and Socialists of the twentieth century have been sharp enough to see that no Church has, as yet, dared to back woman in all her demands, and they are telling her with great earnestness that it is religion which holds her back. "Woman," they say, "was thrust back into the gynecæum by the official action of the Church under the clear direction of its most sacred writings." And we cannot deny the fact. "The women of England were slow to respond (to the call of progress) because of the ideas the clergy had instilled into them," they add, and this too we are unable to deny. "What proportion of the clergy support woman in the remaining struggle for the suffrage, for public offices, for learned professions, for university degrees?" they ask. Yes, it is only too true that "the righting of the most undoubted wrongs to which woman has been subjected, has gone on against the determined opposition of the Church." Free-thinkers have observed that three-fourths of every congregation which is Protestant or Catholic consists of women. "Why," they ask, "do you women uphold doctrines which oppose you? Why are you so much more conservative than your men? Do any of the really intellectual women of the day, the clever workers and writers belong to any orthodox Church?" They remind us that even Harriet Martineau was outside the Church, and hint that had she been hampered by the clergy she would never have helped to raise her sex as she did.

The Catholic Church is at last beginning to see how matters stand in every Christian country. Eminent divines are now boldly coming forward on the side of woman. I have already quoted part of the broad-spirited address given by Bishop Spalding at Washington in 1899. I wish I had an equally broad-spirited speech to report from one of our Anglican bishops, or from one of the Lutheran divines of Berlin. In Norway we may study only too easily the effects of woman's separation from the Church. It has come to this, that the churches of that country are completely abandoned to the peasantry. Educated Norwegian women scorn the very idea of going to church. "Why should we go," they say, "and listen to long sermons from men whose intellectual development is little if any in advance of that of the peasants themselves?" In Sweden it is much the same. In Germany, scepticism has spread hand in hand with Socialism among the lower classes, and among the upper classes, Lutheranism is getting to be looked upon as obsolete. In Germany, as in other countries, it is the Catholic Church which is most awake to the danger which threatens the Faith. Devoted Catholic women are working heart and soul among the lower classes to counteract the influences of Socialism, which has managed to get so tremendous a start of them. In France, where religion is fighting for its life, where for the last twenty years it has been turned out of the schools; in France, too, devoted Catholic leaders are taking their place at the head of the woman movement. "*Aucune main humaine*," says M.

Lamy,[1] '*n'arrêtera la loi du temps plus que la loi de l'espèce. Les femmes iront au savoir.*" This devout Catholic has no fear that education will make sensible women neglect their household duties. "*Car, si les occupations modestes sont l'effroi d'une femme quand elle craint qu'on la croie faite seulement pour celles-la, elles ont, avec leur profit, leurs charmes pour les femmes qu'on sait capables de plus hautes besognes. Quand on est reine on ne craint pas de faire la bergère.*" Woman, in his opinion, gives society its tone; men stop talking sensibly at a party immediately a woman joins their group, "*L'entretien s'arrête et rebondit sur un badinage.*" As a result of this, he tells us, the life of the drawing-room turns upon two poles, scandal and flirtation. In such society it is the empty-headed young men and women who shine the most, these are in their element while sensible men and women are at a disadvantage. The traditional aristocracy of France is gone, and vulgar luxury occupies its place; the aristocracy of mind is not to be found there. On the day when worth and intelligence begin to receive their due the power of wealth will be already on its decline. Dupanloup[2] said much the same in 1860.

Lamy has studied the past history of civilized woman, and he has no hesitation in telling his readers that Protestantism, though it wished to purify society, really took away from woman her religious independence, and that woman's only destiny, in the eyes of the Reformers, was the family; the Reformers proclaimed her to be under a hereditary curse, as a result of which she must for ever, in accordance with

[1] "La Femme de Demain." [2] Bishop of Orleans.

the Divine Will, remain in a kind of slavery to man. Luther, in delivering the nun from her convent prison, imposed incarceration upon all womanhood." In future the Protestant woman had no higher duty than to make herself agreeable to her husband and satisfy his material wants, "*ses vertues doivent repandre un parfume de cuisine.*" In short, woman became a Cinderella without a fairy godmother. The Catholic Church looked on marriage as an unbreakable sacrament, the Reformers lowered it to the rank of a civil contract, subject to human inclination. Every one knows that Luther countenanced morganatic marriages; *mariages de la main gauche*, the French term them. As the Landgrave of Hesse found that his finances would not allow of his bringing his princess with him to the Imperial Diet, he took unto himself a second wife, upon his arrival thither, with the full consent of Luther, Melancthon, Bucer, and six other theologians. Luther, it is true, advised him to keep the matter quiet "lest the vulgar peasantry should be tempted to imitate him." When, however, it had got abroad, and when Luther was asked to condemn the action of the Landgrave, the Reformer replied: "It is impossible for me to condemn a man for having more than one wife at a time, seeing that Holy Scriptures do not forbid it."[1] "The Reformation," continues Lamy, "abandoned woman without a struggle to the caprice of man, and sacrificed her most essential interests and rights to his passions and vices. Luther's disciples who received this tradition

[1] Lamy took these facts from Jansen's "Histoire du peuple Allemand," vol. iii.

not only perpetuated but aggravated it. In one year, at Wittemburg, fifty theses were publicly read in which woman was denied the dignity of a human personality."

We are obliged to confess, after wide research on this subject, that Protestantism has done nothing to improve the condition of woman. But has the Catholic Church done so very much for her? It is promising her much at the beginning of the twentieth century, but what did it do for her in the nineteenth? Let us turn our eyes for a moment to a country where Catholicism has reigned supreme for centuries. What has it done to improve the condition of woman in Spain? The Spanish churches, many of them of superb architectural beauty, draw to-day congregations composed almost entirely of women." "Men do not go to church in this country," said a Spaniard in Toledo, when I remarked on the paucity of men at the church services. "Our men," he continued, "have no longer any faith in the Christian religion, they leave all that to their wives and daughters: those men amongst us who feel a psychical necessity of believing in something beyond what they can see with their bodily eyes, go in for spiritualism, a cult which has gained much favour of late throughout the north of Spain." I have spoken eleswhere of the status enjoyed by Spanish women. It does not say much for the elevating influence of the Catholic Church in the Peninsula.[1] And in France herself, how, in the past, has Catholicism helped woman

[1] See chapters xiii. and xiv.

towards the attainment of civil equality, let alone political? How came it that the Saint Simonists gained for a time so much power over French women? Was it not by promising them that under their dispensation, husband and wife should be equal in Church and State? The Saint Simonists promised to do away with all such abuses as marriages of youth with decrepitude, abuses on which the Catholic Church is silent. Had their body but been able to triumph over internal dissensions they would no doubt have gained over a very large section of the French people, through their sympathy with woman. As it was, their women followers were strong enough in 1831 to start a newspaper in the cause of their sex. They called it *La Tribune des Femmes*.[1] Did the Catholicism of the Middle Ages ever protest against the law which in all the more civilized countries allowed a man to beat his wife if she dared to disobey him? Did it ever protest against the law called *Marquette*?

The Catholic Church was heir to the synagogue, it showed a doggedly strict adherence to Judaism long before Protestantism had come into being.

The women of ancient Gaul went out with their men to battle, encouraging the brave, ridiculing the timid, and taking part in all political affairs. Plutarch tells us that the Gauls consulted their women in making peace or war; their social position in those days bears comparison with that held by the women of ancient Germany, as recounted by Tacitus. It is clear to every student of history that neither

[1] See the writings of Dora d'Istria.

Catholicism nor Protestantism had done much to raise the status of woman before the opening of the present century. Those who wish to know how far Christianity has been influenced through the twenty centuries of its existence by its adhesion to Judaism should consult the able work of Mlle. Chauvin,[1] who, by the way, was the first woman to obtain permission to practise at the bar in France. She begins with an inquiry into the status of the women of ancient Egypt, and then proceeds to draw a comparison between the status of woman under Judaism, and under Mohammedan rule. Moses, she reminds us, owed his life to a midwife. Midwifery seems to have been the only profession open to women in the East. Here we are tempted to pause and ask, "Why did Christendom allow man to compete with woman in a profession that was hers from prehistoric times?" But to continue, Christ, we know, triumphed over the old dispensation. How came it then that Judaism was permitted to invade His doctrines? In the early days of Christianity women had their recognised sacerdotal and public functions. There were lady physicians and lady surgeons in the Middle Ages, a female professor of medicine at Salerno wrote a treatise entitled "Diseases of Woman." Judaism, as Mlle. Chauvin has pointed out, destroyed the work of Christ for woman. One profession after another became closed to the female sex, till at last that of courtesan seemed to be the only one left open Christianity has, through the influence of Judaism countenanced for centuries the profession of prostitu-

[1] Jeanne Chauvin, "Professions accessibles aux Femmes," 1892.

tion. "*Cette profession reçut une organisation corporative; il y eut dans la plupart des villes des maisons de femmes relevant fiscalement sort de la cité, sort du seigneur ou de l'Église, dans les caisses desquels tombait leur revenu net. Ces femmes élisaient une matrone qui avait le soin de la discipline et le soin du bon ordre. Il y avait aussi des corporations de ce genre attachées au service des armées.*" Rationalists have made some capital out of the fact that while the profession of courtesan has been left open to women through all the ages, that of actress was forbidden them by the Emperor Theodosius under the influence of the Church. Consequently it was not till the year 1656 that an English woman dared to appear upon the stage.[1] The earliest reference to female performances in the Spanish theatre belongs to the year 1534, it was not till the latter half of that century that it became customary in France for a woman to appear upon the stage. When in 1629 some French and Spanish actresses appeared in England they were hooted by the public. An actress was still a novelty in London in the days of Pepys, and his Diary contains rhapsodic passages describing the exceptional pleasure their performances gave him. In our day neither Catholics nor Protestants would think of regarding the profession of an actress as unwomanly. A woman may now appear upon the stage in the most disreputable of scenes, and personate the most immoral of characters, she may cast aside all feminine modesty—upon the stage. A

[1] See Gerhardt and Simon, "Mutterschaft und Geistige Arbeit," 1901.

young mother may leave her babe to appear night after night before the footlights to the injury of her own health and that of her child. To this, the Christian Churches have no objection. Playing the part of an imaginary love-sick girl, the actress may fall into the arms of the actor lover, and cling to his neck night after night before thousands of enraptured spectators. In this, there is thought to be nothing unwomanly. Here at anyrate Christianity is less narrow to-day than it was in the days of Theodosius.[1]

Now, in the twentieth century, it is the Catholic Church which tells the women of its flock that they have but to remain faithful, and the Church will not only stand up for them, but come forth as their champion and fight their cause. In Belgium, Catholic dignitaries are already demanding the franchise for woman, and Catholic barristers are fighting for her civil and political rights. They have decided that they must not leave her to be the meek victim of Socialism. Catholic feminists and socialist feminists are engaging in a hand to hand fight for women. "We ought to be feminists, we Catholics," say barristers and clergy alike. "We ought to be feminists by tradition, from a spirit of justice, and of charity," and they blame the French Revolution first, and then Napoleon, for suppressing woman's civil rights. "Woman suffers under the existing laws, these laws are unjust, it is for us to reform them."

[1] "There are jests which you would be ashamed to make yourself, and yet on the comic stage, or again in private when you hear them, you are greatly amused by them, instead of being disgusted by their unseemliness."—Plato's "Republic," book x.

These laws oppress the working classes even more than they do the middle class. It is for us to come to the rescue of the working woman.[1] We are told that the divorce laws of Belgium are, in certain respects, more unjust to woman than those of any country in Europe; happily they are on the eve of reform; but they are still so hard upon the working woman that she is constantly tempted to ignore the marriage rite in order to avoid the injustice of the marriage laws. If, however, she goes through the ceremony of marriage, her husband acquires the lawful right to dispose of every stick and stone she brings with her in marriage, and of every farthing she earns with the sweat of her brow; he may drink away her house and home, or give her property to another woman. She has no redress, she is his slave and he is her master. The Catholics of Belgium are divided as to the best way of alleviating the miserable condition of the working woman. Some are in favour of excluding woman from all work that takes the worker out of her home; they think this is the only way to protect the sacred interests of the family: others, on the contrary, see that such a step is not only impracticable, but impossible, they see that a great revolution has taken place in family life, they see what Socialists have seen for a long time, that the husband and father can no longer earn enough to support his wife and children, and that to prevent the wife from going out to work would mean, in thousands of cases, to condemn her and her little ones to starvation or worse. It is the same more or

[1] Colaert et Henry, "La Femme Électeur," 1901.

less in all countries. Every lady who works among the poor in England knows that the wife, in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand, must go out to work if her children are to be fed and clothed. Where the husband earns only eighteen shillings a week, there is not much for a wife and six children. Twenty-two shillings a week is considered an average wage for the father of a family of seven in many London districts, and it is much the same in other countries. Yet, according to German reckoning, it is impossible for a German workman to provide himself his wife and two children with the bare necessaries of life for less than seventy-five pounds a year (fifteen hundred marks). "It is useless," remarks a Belgian Catholic, "to oppose the irresistible current," and such are the economic tendencies of the twentieth century. The old "home" is disappearing, and to run after it is simply a waste of our strength and breath. A new kind of home is already looming on the horizon, one where woman will still be wife and mother, but where she will no longer be slave." Socialism has told woman that every human being has a right to work, and Catholics are coming round to that view. "*Interdise à la femme de travailler ? c'est méconnaître absolument le principe du droit au travail . . . jeter une foule de femmes dans le misère et dans la prostitution.*" To forbid the married woman to work would be the refinement of cruelty. No, let the salary of the working woman be made equal to that of the working man, and then, if the employers prefer men, they will choose men. If women's work is really

inferior, it will follow that factories will cease to employ them. Belgian Catholics are advising the working women to combine, that they may fight for higher wages, and they are urging the State to pass a law establishing a minimum wage identical for both sexes. Catholics are no longer leaving these demands to Socialists. What are Protestants doing?

In travelling from one European country to another I have been astonished to see the rapidity with which women are taking the posts formerly filled entirely by men. Women are now to be found in counting houses, banks, business houses, telephone and telegraph offices in almost every northern country in Europe. "How has woman managed to oust man in this fashion? Because she offers her services for a lower salary. Woman was proud and pleased when first she discovered that she could oust man so easily, but alas, she was only 'forging arms against herself' when she agreed to undersell her services. It was the greatest mistake her sex had made since the day when Eve plucked the apple."

Many Catholics are to-day strongly in favour of the extension of the franchise to woman. "*La femme n'obtiendra rien tant qu'elle ne jouira pas des droits politique. . . . Il faut considérer que le bulletin de vote sera le grand moyen d'affranchisement de la femme, car le legislateur fera pour son électrice bien des choses aux quelles il n'eut pas même 'trouvé le temps' de songer s'il se fût agé d'une simple citoyenne politiquement incapable. . . . Depuis que l'ouvrier est électeur son éducation se fait progressivement, il*

en sera même pour la femme."[1] Even the Catholic Church is discovering that "principle must sometimes give way to circumstance."

M. Lamy is one of those Catholics who have noted the progress of Socialism among the women of France. He turns to his countrywomen and says, "Socialism tells you that all existing institutions must be overturned before woman can obtain her rights. It is as if a piece of gold lay beneath a majestic edifice and you were told that you must raze that edifice to the ground to get possession of the gold." The Catholics of Belgium have gone a step further, they have been telling woman that even when the edifice is razed to the ground they, the women, will not get the gold. "See," they cry, "the Socialists are divided among themselves on the subject of claiming the franchise for you, and as long as they have your support they will take care not to impede their own cause by fighting your battles. They may have written 'equality of the sexes' on their banners, but they are far too busy just now with trying to get rid of the clergy, and of capitalism, to take up the cudgels for woman. They will adjourn indefinitely the struggle for your rights with the excuse that woman is not yet capable of exercising them." And indeed woman herself is to-day accusing the Socialists of leaving their wives and children as hostages in the hands of the enemy.[2] The Belgian women who have become Socialists in order to advance the cause of women

[1] "La Femme Électeur."

[2] See article by Mme. Gatti di Gamord, cited by Colaert.

have been bitterly disappointed in their leaders. Some of the more far-sighted among the Socialists *s'ingenièrent à rattacher droitement le féminisme au socialisme. . .*" Catholicism and Socialism are now quite alive to the fact that the women of Belgium are no longer a negligible quantity, nay, that they are already a force capable of destroying the balance of power between powerful political parties. "Socialism has organised its women," cry the Catholics, "let us hasten to organise ours."

In France M. Lamy is reminding woman that it was the Catholic Association of 1850 which first voted in favour of public schools for girls, and that the schools when started would have been at a complete loss for teachers had not the nuns volunteered their services. When Bebel cried in the Reichstag, "Where woman goes there will be victory," he stirred the Catholics of France and Germany to action. "Socialism," says Lamy, "promises to woman what bourgeois philosophers have always refused her, a condition similar to that of man, equality in work, and equality in the pleasures of life." And he adds, "That is all very well, but they are putting men and women into two separate camps, and the result will be that when the two are pitted against one another, man, being physically the stronger, will have the advantage on his side. *J'ai bien peur que l'esprit de corps ait son egoisme le plus parfait dans l'esprit de sexe et que l'homme devenu rival de la femme songe à exploiter le labeur de cette rivale au profit de sa propre paresse.*" M. Lamy sees what I have already

pointed out in another chapter, the danger and the futility of segregating the sexes. He also points out that even if woman through being numerically stronger than man were to be able to make the laws, her want of physical force would result in her being crushed by the superior strength of man, and then there would be a danger of her becoming a slave both to man and to the State. "And what," he continues, "will become of the Socialist woman in her old age, when she is too old for work or pleasure? She will find herself homeless at the last, however many husbands she may have had in her youth and prime, and her children will have no more reverence or affection for her than for other women."

The Socialists, having "dethroned their Creator, and having suppressed His function of King of kings as unnecessary and humiliating to man's dignity, wish to become the conservators of a form of government in which they are the Cabinet Ministers." They are satisfied that they will be able alone and unaided to bring peace and good-will upon earth. It must not be supposed, however, that they have the sympathy of all rationalists and free-thinkers; on the contrary many of these are their deadliest enemies. Let us take, for instance, M. Gustav Le Bon, an anthropologist belonging to no school, who has compared Socialism to a religious belief. This student tells us that not only is Socialism a religious belief, but it is the one of all others which has the lowest ideals. "*Its promises are all for this world.*" And some at least of the sects who are called Christian Socialists are looking for

their reward here below. Such for instance is the hope of the American community at Jerusalem, who have gone there to await the arrival of the millennium. I have myself enjoyed their hospitality, and can witness to the fact that, with the unimportant exception of the lady president and the treasurer, they have all things in common, as far as it is possible.

M. Le Bon points out that there are innumerable sects among the Socialists, and that these sects hate each other cordially. This writer shows himself to be as anxious to save the middle classes from Socialism as the Catholics are to gain over woman. He affirms that the *bourgeoisie* has lost more of its prestige in a century than the aristocracy has done in a thousand years; he utters the solemn warning that if Socialism gains the day, there will be a "*fusillade en bloc de tous les bourgeois*," after which the conquerors will lump all existing capital together and proceed every one to help himself—the State, that is Socialism, keeping constant guard that no man takes a penny more than he ought. "But when all the capital is gone," ask M. Le Bon, "where will they get more?"[1] And when society has been destroyed, by what marvellous miracle will it re-establish itself? If it has to go through all the successive stages again where will the Anarchists be gainers? M. Jean Grave has attempted to answer this question by showing

[1] It is clear from recent speeches by Mr Keir Hardie that his party despises the genius which alone can build up thriving commercial houses.

that the wished for change will come about so gradually that it will hardly be noticed, that there will be, in his opinion, no sudden upheaval, no great revolution brought about by force, but a slow and sure transformation, a matter of years, perhaps even of generations.[1] He does not attempt, however, to deny the truth of M. Le Bon's assertion that the whole army of Socialists and Anarchists are marching towards the destruction of our heritage of the past. And no one has ever denied that Socialism can count most surely upon the support of the least intelligent classes in every country, upon those who would never start a revolution, but are always ready to follow one. The crowd in our day is much the same as it was in the eighteenth century when Fielding likened it to an ass which pricked up its long ears as soon as words of any weight were addressed to it. "If you want the mob to listen to you," he said, "you must appeal to its feelings, not to its reason." The very same thing is constantly said about women in our day, and there are still many English ladies who pride themselves on being governed by their feelings, rather than by their reason, and who look upon a woman who is governed by the latter as rather *outré*. Perhaps this is why Socialism has been so successful with women.

M. Le Bon tells us that the reason why Socialism is spreading to the upper classes is that they are beginning to look upon it as an invincible force, and to accept it without reflection, in short—it has become

[1] "La Société Future."

the fashion. "*La crainte de l'opinion des imbéciles a toujours constitué un des facteurs importants de l'histoire.*" "But," he adds, "the guillotine will show that to give in, is to give up one's life." Harriet Martineau was shocked to find how submissively the middle-classes of America bowed before current opinion in 1835, and strangely enough it is the Americans who, according to M. Le Bon, will be the first to suffer from Socialism. Sceptical indifference, which this writer calls "the great disease of modern *bourgeoisie*," is only a cover for the moral weakness which has not the courage of its convictions, but is ever ready to hurl sarcasm and ridicule on those who have. Of all the women I have met it is those of middle-class England who have the greatest horror of ridicule. There are thousands of English women who would gladly make any sacrifice rather than own that they took an interest in politics or sympathised with those women who are fighting for the Suffrage. Like sheep, the middle classes prefer to do every thing in flocks.

Certain impartial sociologists of our country have had a good deal to say of late about the hard lot of England's lower middle class, her *petite bourgeoisie*. We hear about their hard struggle to make both ends meet and to keep up appearances, but we never hear them accused of thriftlessness such as the classes below theirs are so often guilty of. The dust-bin of an English bourgeois family rarely contains anything like so good a picking for the dustmen as that of the artisan, and the bourgeois housewife is thankful that she can obtain New Zealand meat from her butcher,

as it is so much cheaper than Canterbury mutton, whereas the railway porter and the postman, the painter and the builder, would scorn to think that New Zealand meat ever entered their doors, it being, in their opinion, "fit only for the dogs." I have carefully inquired whether the cause of this fastidiousness did not lie in a supposition that frozen meat contained less nourishment, but ladies who give their lives to work among these people, assure me that the only ground for their refusal of it is their pride. Families where there are seven or more children, and where the father often earns less than twenty-five shillings a week, will not dream of paying less than elevenpence per pound for their meat, while thousands of bourgeois families pay eightpence and tenpence. How comes it that we hear nothing of these things from our English Socialists? They are incontrovertible facts. If the Socialists of our country have the good of the lower classes at heart, why do they not start a campaign against the vulgar extravagance in the dress of respectable English servant girls on their "Sundays out?" The young men, to gain whose approval these young women spend every farthing of their wages on this superfluous finery, are many of them members of respectable trade unions. Should they not try and check this growing slavery to fashion in their prospective wives? *In no country in Europe do the women of the lower class spend so much money upon their dress as in England.* A friend, in whose field the hay had been cut, had invited a party of young friends to the hay-making, and at the same time gave her servants permission to

invite a few acquaintances to tea in another corner of the field. A foreigner passing through the field that afternoon might have been somewhat surprised to find that the guests of the proprietress were all in simple cotton blouses, while the guests of the servants, maids from the houses of the neighbouring gentry, shone in the full splendour of white silk and satin. Similar instances will occur to every reader's mind. And what do Socialists think about the even more extravagant thriftlessness of our factory girls? And why do they not get the licence to sell alcoholic drinks withdrawn from our petty shopkeepers? The facility with which working women and girls can now obtain spirituous liquors at the smallest shops is becoming quite as great a curse to our country as any of the evils which Socialism promises to destroy. In the vicinity of London, drink is doing more harm among the mothers and future mothers of our race than it is doing amongst the men. Women obtain drink secretly, and unknown to their husbands, in small quantities, and it has the effect of small and frequent doses of poison. The men go openly to the public-house, have a good drink and finish, for the time at least, but the women are always at it.

"At present," says M. Le Bon, the "artisan may dream of one day becoming a capitalist, but under collectivism he will not be able to do so, for he will be under the anonymous tyranny of a levelling State. The world will be like one huge sugar-plantation." We can console ourselves, however, that this blessed state of things is still somewhat distant. In the meantime we would suggest that all educated persons

who call themselves Socialists should read and digest that part of Plato's Republic which deals with the subject of democracy and tyranny. There they will find their own history, and that will enable them to generalise as to the possibilities of the future.

CHAPTER X

SOCIALISM AND ANARCHISM

EVERY sect of the Socialists has its own particular views on the future of woman, and every book published by Socialists or Anarchists has some suggestion to make as to the amelioration of her lot in this world. We have seen in the preceding chapter how these energetic propaganda among the female sex have at length aroused the Catholic Church in France, Germany, Belgium and the United States, to a sense of the danger that threatens it. We have seen how Rationalism, conscious of the struggle that is going on, is also joining in the fray, not so much with a view to the reconstruction of society as with a view to the destruction of all religions and religious beliefs whatsoever, and the final enthronement of human reason in their stead.

There is absolutely nothing original in what Socialism and Anarchism are offering to woman. Plato, in laying down his plan for the formation of an ideal republic four hundred years before the birth of Christ, left woman perfectly free to develop all her powers; he did not attempt to define any limit beyond which it would be detrimental to the good of the State for her to proceed. I have seen it affirmed

in at least half the books on woman, of modern times, that Plato recognised no ideal for woman. Stendhal was, I believe, the first to propagate this erroneous idea, and others seem to have copied his words without taking the trouble to trace them to their source. The fact is that Plato recognised woman's right to the full development of all her powers as far as her nature would allow, both mental and physical; he recognised, for instance, that some women might be "born" physicians, to use a colloquial phrase of our own, and have the same peculiar aptitude for the pursuit of medicine as certain men—

ἰατρικὸν μὲν καὶ ἰατρικὴν τὴν ψυχὴν ὄντας,

and he even thought it would be expedient for them to enter the army. This is all the more remarkable because, in his day, examples of women doing any kind of work, mental or industrial, as well as men could do it, were practically unknown. The Socialist can look back through the ages that separate himself from Plato and pick out women who have proved themselves indisputably to far excel the average man in every science, art or industry that has ever been practised by the human race, but Plato had far less to go upon, and it is therefore all the more remarkable that he should have been so ready to let woman try her hand at everything and show what she could do. The female citizen of Plato's ideal republic was to have full freedom to develop all her capabilities and powers to the utmost. In short, she was to have infinitely greater freedom in that respect than any one of the female subjects of King Edward VII. can boast

of at the beginning of the twentieth century! Plato, as we have said, threw the military profession open to women in his ideal State. England, twenty-four centuries later, refuses to admit her to the bar. A voluminous literature has been poured forth by the male sex to prove that, as a rule, woman's work is inferior to man's work. We are constantly reminded, especially by Englishmen, that a man-cook gets higher wages than a woman-cook (these gentlemen forget, by the way, that in cooking it is a matter rather of nationality than of sex. The *French* man-cook gets the high wages—not the *English* man-cook), and Plato himself admitted that, though weaving, and baking, and jam-making were arts in which women reached a high degree of excellence, men practising them could reach a still higher level. Yet in spite of this, our philosopher did not hesitate to let Socrates say that, "In the administration of a State, neither a woman, as a woman, nor a man, as a man, has any special function, but the gifts of nature are equally diffused in both sexes: all the pursuits of men are the pursuits of women also, and in all of them a woman is only a weaker man," and Glaucon answers "Very true."

"Then are we to impose all our enactments on men and none of them on women?" asks Socrates.

"That will never do."

"One woman has a gift of healing, another not; one is a musician, and another is not a musician."

"Very true."

"And one woman has a turn for gymnastic and military exercises, and another is unwarlike and hates gymnastic."

"Beyond question."

"And one woman is a philosopher, and another is an enemy of philosophy; one has spirit, and another is without spirit."

"That is also true."

"Then one woman will have the temper of a guardian and another not; for was not the selection of the male guardians determined by these sort of differences?"

"Very true."

"Then the woman has equally with the man the qualities which make a guardian; she differs only in degrees of strength."

"Obviously."

"And those women who have such qualities are to be selected as the companions and colleagues of our guardians, since they resemble them in ability and character."

"Very true."

"And being of the same nature with them ought they not to have the same pursuits?"

"They ought."

"Then, as we were saying before, there is nothing unnatural in assigning music and gymnastic to the wives of the guardians: to that point we come round again."

"Very good."

"The law which thus enacted, instead of being an impossibility or mere aspiration, was agreeable

to nature, and the contrary practice, which prevails at present, is in reality a violation of nature."

. . . . . .

"You will admit that the same education which makes a man a good guardian will make a woman a good guardian: for their original nature is the same."

"Yes."

"I should like to ask you a question. Would you say that all men are equal in excellence, or is one man better than another?"

"The latter."

"And in our imaginary Commonwealth which do you reckon the better, the guardians who have been brought up on our model system, or the cobblers whose education has been cobbling?"

"What a ridiculous question."

"You have answered me," I replied. "Well, and may we not further say that our guardians are the best of our citizens?"

"Yes, again I say the very best."

"And can there be anything better for the interests of the State than that the men and women of a State should be as good as possible?"

"There can be nothing better."

"And our course of music and gymnastic will accomplish this?"

"Certainly."

"Then we have made an enactment not only possible but in the highest degree advantageous to the State."

"True."[1]

[1] Dialogues of Plato, vol. iii. book v. p. 328. Tr. by Jowett.

There are Socialists in every civilized country who tell us that the family, and family life as we know it at present, are doomed to extinction in the near future. We cannot deny that there is a good deal of truth in what they say. Let us take England first, and see whether the old-fashioned English family shows signs of disappearing. How is it with the classes of society where Socialism has gained the largest number of recruits? John and Sarah Smith live in yonder suburban cottage with their seven children. John is, of course, away at his work, but we will go and have a chat with his wife and children. Alas! we soon discover that the cottage is empty, the mother of the family works all day at a neighbouring steam laundry, the elder girl is engaged in a factory, and the younger children are "put out" every day with a neighbour who makes what she can by looking after a number of such children. The family breakfast was cooked over a gas ring, the family supper will be prepared in the same manner. John will find no bright fire to welcome him when he returns home this cold, wet winter's evening, and as soon as he has swallowed his supper he will hurry away from his cheerless cottage into the brilliantly-lighted and comfortably warm public-house, to pass the remainder of the evening in the society of those of his men friends who have followed his example. The tired mother washes up, puts the little ones to bed, and warms her poor frozen body with a pull at the whisky bottle. The eldest daughter comes out from the factory often on the point of collapse

from sheer bodily weariness; it is no uncommon thing for her to join two or three of her companions in the purchase of a bottle of whisky, which is then handed from one to the other of the girlish group till its contents are gone. And on Sundays? Even on Sundays there is no real family life. John spends the greater part of the day in bed, incapacitated by Saturday's drinking bout, and drinks himself drunk again in the evening with the store of alcohol the payment of his wages has enabled him to procure on Saturday.

The picture we have drawn is a typical one taken from life, and it only varies in detail from the kind of picture we should draw had we taken a German or French family instead of an English one. Who has not heard of *blauer Montag* or "blue Monday," so called because of the "blue" state in which the German artisan finds himself on Monday morning after his week-end debauch. And who has not heard of the absinthe craze in France and in Belgium? What family life is there for the wife and children of the Paris or Brussels artisan who is steadily poisoning himself with a drink whose effect is slow but deadly? Half the crime that is committed in Paris is known to result from the vice of absinthe drinking. In time the poison affects the brain, causing an excitability bordering on and often ending in madness. The governments of the respective countries see the growing evil, and are trying to check it by law; several Cantons of Switzerland have already stopped its production. But if they succeed, will

they be able to restore family life to what it was in the past, to what it was a hundred years ago, before the invention of all the wonderful machinery which is the real cause of the breaking up of the home? Not Socialism, not the woman movement, is breaking up home life among the peoples, but the invention of machinery. M. Le Bon reminds us that less than a century ago the workmen's tools in civilized Europe were of a type similar to those depicted on the tombs of ancient Egypt.[1] To-day rapid transformations are taking place in every kind of industry: the more we perfect our machinery the cheaper labour must become, and the less skill will be required. Now that a machine capable of being worked by one man performs the work of 10,000 men, now that one factory girl can, with the help of machinery, get through in a day work that would formerly have given a day's employment to several hundreds of men, it is easy to see how great must necessarily be the changes brought about in the life of the lower classes. An able German writer[2] has collected and published in one volume heartrending descriptions and statistics of the terrible hardships endured by the working classes of all civilized countries in the nineteenth century. Christian England is well represented in her harrowing pages, and as we read them we cease to wonder that Socialism and Anarchism have gained so great a hold upon our working men and women. Frau Lily Braun is of the opinion that the

[1] The plough of Virgil is still in use in Galicia.
[2] Lily Braun, "Die Fraunenfrage," 1901.

miseries of these poor people will be intensified in proportion to the growth of great industries and the spread of factories. Man, it seems, must become more and more the slave of the machinery he has himself invented. Anarchism alone, it would seem, sees the remedy for all our ills; in some miraculous way it is going to preserve the individual freedom of every human being by enforcing solidarity with an iron hand, its theorists ignoring the obvious fact that the two are incompatible. Woman, being in its eyes one of the most powerful forces of revolution, must be won over.

Anarchism tells us that at the present time women of the moneyed classes are practically above the laws that are unjust to their sex, and that it is only the poor woman who is still in bondage to the letter of the law. Let these but range themselves on the side of Anarchism, and their delivery will be speedy. In the good time coming all the railways will be in the hands of the community. Poor as well as rich will be able to indulge in the pleasures of travel, and every sick person will be able to choose the climate best suited to his or her state of health.[1] In that day every human being will be free to satisfy his or her every want. Every one will fall into the place he or she is fitted by nature to fill, and no one will be doing any work that goes against the grain. The question of the bringing-up of children is to be greatly simplified. Fathers and mothers who wish to be relieved of the responsibility of rearing

[1] See Jean Grave, "La Société Future."

their own offspring will be free to hand them over to those who adore children and whose joy it will be to nurture and tend them. The complete liberty that will be allowed to every individual will act as a panacea to all human ills. The married couple will be free to separate as soon as they begin to tire of one another's company, and consequently such a thing as divorce will be unheard of. In short, marrying and giving in marriage will be superfluous in this heaven-upon-earth. The wheels of life will run as smoothly as if they had been oiled. Anarchy is no enemy to order; in the eyes of the Anarchist it is merely a political negation. Anarchy, we are to believe, spells unified liberty, peace and concord. This is all most promising, but we do not quite see who is going to work the machinery.

Under the government of Anarchism female genius as well as male genius is to find a smooth path prepared for it. There will be no social ladder for weary feet to climb. Society will consist of one dead level. In the existing society, they tell us, three-fourths of those who are naturally endowed with a love of art, and would gladly devote their lives to it, are prevented by our conditions of existence; forced to spend eight, ten, or twelve hours a day labouring for the bread they eat, it is impossible for them to cultivate their muse. Under the sway of Anarchism, on the contrary, it will be possible for every one to earn all the money required for board and lodging by a minimum amount of labour, and then every

aspirant will have plenty of time and energy to devote to his or her art; and as the intellectual level of the public will have been raised, every genius will find it easy to manifest himself or herself to the world. Truly it is sad to believe that so many who might be great, and leave great works behind them, are now unable to blossom forth! I have heard it said that for a poor Englishman to rise in the world without influence or family to help him is as hard as it would be to put one's head through a brick wall. Under Anarchism, however, there will be no *rising*. We are distinctly warned that no one will be permitted to "arriver." It will simply be a case of the tree blossoming where it stands, and getting all the rain and sunshine that it needs without any cold and blasting winds or biting frosts. No one will deny that it is very hard in these days for a male genius born in poverty to achieve greatness, and *no one will deny that it is very much harder still for a female genius;* the best part of a poor man's life has to be spent in getting to the point where others start. The man or woman "born in humble rank has not the same time for success, and time is a factor in success."[1]

Anarchists forget, however, that genius needs other stimulants besides those we have mentioned, and environment is as important as leisure or schooling. Some one has recently remarked that Shakespeare would never have written a single drama if he could have run his father's business

[1] B. C. Constable, "Poverty and Hereditary Genius."

successfully. When Anarchy reigns supreme there will be neither necessity nor ambition to spur us on. Absolute equality will destroy not only individual freedom, as Wundt and many other thinkers have prophesied, but also individual aspiration towards higher things. It is very doubtful whether the encouragement which Anarchism proposes to give to genius will not be more than counterbalanced by the depressing influence of an unsympathetic, not to say prosaic, atmosphere. We would also ask with Wundt, What is the highest ideal of a free personality? And how can that ideal personality be united to an ideal state of human society? These are questions that Anarchism has still to answer. Wundt has given us his views about family life. He is convinced that in every class the family must suffer if the mother goes out to work, which is equivalent to saying that the family is suffering already, seeing that practically all mothers of the third and fourth classes do go out to work, and many bourgeois mothers as well. This philosopher advises that the State should strive to arrange things so that each husband can earn enough to support his wife and family, forgetting that even if this were possible, which it is not at present, nothing would prevent the said husband from drinking himself to death with the extra money! And how, we would add, is Anarchism going to free us from the curse of alcohol?

In addressing woman, Anarchism takes care to remind her that in the society of the future she will

be, not only loved, but respected. Respected as man's intellectual equal, in spite of the fact that her brain is smaller and lighter than his; Anarchism reminds her that the scientists who proclaim her mental inferiority are, for the most part, the very men who talk of those who work as "the inferior classes." Anarchism has not time to go to the source of everything it finds in books, so it is not surprising that it has made capital out of the oft-repeated story of the Council of Mâcon, and reminded woman that the Fathers of the Church seriously discussed the question as to whether woman possessed a soul. Catholic feminists are aware of this, and have recently taken care to explain that the whole story is a lie. To begin with, the Council of Mâcon was not an ecumenical council, but a chance gathering together of a few bishops at which one of them happened to ask whether it was grammatically correct to apply the term *homo* to both sexes. Neither the Church nor the Catholics have ever denied that woman has a soul. But if they did, how comes it that they have canonised so many of them?[1]

In every country, increased facilities for the attainment of higher education, and of ultimate university degrees and diplomas, are tempting thousands of young people of both sexes to spend precious time and money in fitting themselves for posts which there is little chance of their ever being able to fill. The supply is already infinitely greater than the demand. In Russia this evil is perhaps

[1] See "La Femme Électeur" for full refutation of the legend in question.

more aggravated than elsewhere,[1] and the unfortunate "intellectuals" who are turned out of these colleges every year with no prospect of getting any work to do, almost invariably join one or other of the revolutionary bodies. In France, where the same thing is going on, people are actually blaming the professors for making learning so attractive to young men and forgetting how terrible is the disappointment that awaits those who fondly hope that their diplomas will help them to earn money. M. Le Bon assures us that the ranks of Socialism in France are crowded with disappointed university men, who, having had all initiative and push knocked out of them by a uniform academic training, are incapable of turning their energies to account in any other direction. Every year more and more women crowd with the men towards the same goal, and thus make the competition keener; this often leads to a feeling of resentment on the part of their male rivals. In America and in Sweden the teaching profession is now practically in the hands of women, for the men, as a rule, prefer to devote themselves to business in one form or another. Whether this will ever come to be the case all over Europe we cannot say, but certain it is that in Europe a university training no longer insures either man or woman against penury, and the risks of depending on it for ultimate support are growing greater every year.

M. Turgeon has devoted a long chapter in his

[1] See chapter on Khakoff in my "Russia" in reference to this subject.

book on French Feminism to the misfortunes of the learned woman. He waxes eloquent over her zeal for knowledge, her feminine curiosity, her burning ambition to reap the honours she sees awarded to scientific men, and then he depicts her bitter disappointment. "What," he cries, "is to become of the lady doctors without patients, of the certificated teachers without pupils? The liberal professions are overcrowded. . . . In many women the taste for science and the love of knowledge result from a desire to rival and equal man." He then proceeds to show how, worn out with waiting for the position and honours that never come, she begins to grow old, her charms and graces disappear one by one, and it is then that her embittered feelings become a prey to the boldest and maddest suggestions of revenge against fate, and she lends an ear to Anarchism. Then health too, in many cases affected by the long strain of hard intellectual work, breaks down at last and she becomes, if nothing worse, a complete wreck. The picture is a sad one truly, but the view is one-sided and overdrawn. In real life the number of women whose health is affected by the intellectual strain of college work is very small as compared to the number of women whose health breaks down through anxiety about the future and household worry. Turgeon argues that even if we accept the doctrine that mind has no sex,[1] the fact remains that it is incarnated into two distinct beings, and that woman's body is more quickly and more seriously

[1] Upheld by Feijoo, one of the most brilliant writers of the eighteenth century.

affected by prolonged intellectual effort than man's, her constitution and her temperament being against her in the struggle; and man should therefore, in Turgeon's opinion, continue to do as he has always done, and keep her within her proper limits. Alas! if all the young women of Europe could be brought over to M. Turgeon's way of thinking, there would still be the unhappy spectacle of thousands of helplessly-learned young men struggling for one vacant post. M. Le Bon tells us that a thousand more men are turned out of the French Universities every year than there are posts to be filled.[1] These are all men who cannot afford to marry until they get work to do, and the girls they would have married, under more favourable conditions, are obliged to look for work too; their fathers can no longer afford to keep idle daughters at home. The competition between women who content themselves with work that requires little or no intellectual study is quite as keen, though M. Turgeon ignores the fact, and the number of competitors in that field is infinitely greater. Just as young men are being turned out of the Universities without a definite prospect of work, so are more and more young girls without prospect of either marriage or occupation.

Wikmark reminds us that in Sweden right up to the forties of the last century there was plenty of work for the unmarried girl to do in her parent's home. Brandy was distilled in the middle-class household, soap was manufactured, and vinegar prepared by the burger's wife and daughters. Weav-

[1] "Psychologie du Socialisme."

ing, knitting and sewing were all done at home. Machinery has now taken away the occupation of the middle-class woman, and left her free to go out into the world and compete with man. Added to this there is a growing excess in the number of women over that of the men in the middle classes of Europe.

Swedish sympathisers have taken perhaps the boldest step of any, to open new fields of activity to woman; they have started women in such occupations as watch-making and newspaper editing and agriculture, but we are told that so far their efforts have met with no very encouraging success; woman is just as much man's rival in these occupations as she is in the Universities. In Sweden the Woman Movement began with the women of the upper classes. It was in full swing, according to Wikmark,[1] in 1859, though it did not receive public acknowledgment till 1884. It differed from the Woman Movements in England and Germany in being a movement more of the aristocracy than of the *bourgeoisie*, and one which had its roots in the eighteenth century—the century in which the ladies of the aristocracy wielded so immense an influence on art and literature. Later when, owing to the introduction of machinery, the Woman Movement of the lower classes came into being, the immense gulf between the two was bridged over by philanthropy. The Woman Movement among the proletariat of Sweden is, as in other countries, a far simpler problem, it is a question of practical politics. No one in any land has ever stood in the way of the woman of the lower

[1] Dr Elon Wikmark, "Die Frauenfrage," 1905.

classes and told her that she was invading man's province when she attempted to carry heavy burdens, to lay bricks, or to do any work that would naturally fall to the men of her rank in life; except it be in such activities as mining or soldiering, she has never had to fight her way into any work by other means than that of underselling her labour. While the woman movement among the lower classes is a result of the introduction of machinery, that among the higher class is a result, not only of the introduction of machinery, but also of the preponderance of women over men. Machinery has also taken away the work of the middle-class woman, and the growing preponderance of women over men in that class has lessened the chance of the woman who has no home of getting one by means of marriage.

Socialism and Anarchism, each in its own way, are promising emancipation to women of every class, and happiness unalloyed to every human being. The evolution of the new society has already begun, we are told, and the spirit of solidarity which manifests itself in the mob, and the growing dread of public opinion, are expected to be more powerful to check the transgressor than all our paraphernalia for enforcing the law.

Anarchists distinctly state that they do not expect to wipe out all our social evils by means of a sudden and violent revolution, or by laying the axe at the root of every cause of evil on one particular day in the history of the human race. They hope to bring about a quiet and peaceful evolution from the existing state of things to a better and happier one, by a quiet propaganda, and by gentle but persistent war

against all our property, customs, habits and prejudices, till they disappear one by one, leaving us free to adopt a healthier and happier mode of life. This sounds very plausible, and will doubtless meet with the full approval of many who have the good of society at heart, so long as they have no property and no attack is made upon their own pet customs, habits and prejudices.

We are reminded rather unpleasantly by those who plead in favour of Anarchism that in the present state of society numbers of women are regularly sold to men in every class of society independently of their own choice in the matter. In barbaric societies the sale is direct, but in civilized countries it is indirect, and takes the name of marriage or prostitution.[1] In France the young girl of the upper classes is delivered over to a man for whom she cannot possibly feel the least affection; she is, oftener than not, a victim led to the sacrifice. And when two young people do fall in love with each other—are they not victimised by the cruelty of our conventions? The expensive show of the wedding ceremony, the necessity of a honeymoon, are not these a spectacle to frighten a modest young man from marriage? When the young woman who has been sold in a *mariage de convenance* eventually meets with one whom she can love, divorce is made impossible for her by her religion and by custom. Is it surprising that she so frequently steps off the right path? Divorce, we are reminded, is difficult in every country, it is almost impossible in some, and it is always more or less a matter of means,

[1] J. Novikow.

and consequently inaccessible to ninety-nine out of a hundred among the poorer classes. Anarchism insists upon it that if a woman does not love her husband but loves another in his place, she has a right to leave her husband. Such a suggestion will appear shocking to many pious minds, but surely it is equally shocking to chain a woman for life to a man who himself longs to get rid of her and to whom her parents married her before she was old enough to know what marriage meant? Society has justice on its side when it punishes a woman who transgresses against the established order of things, but is it equally so when it enforces a child marriage and then casts obloquy and shame on the woman who honestly and bravely demands that a loveless union may be dissolved in order that a happier one may be contracted?

Those very persons who are never tired of proclaiming that motherhood is the only form of perfect womanhood are the very ones who heap shame upon the mother who, far more sinned against than sinning, has no husband to support herself and her unhappy little one. Are these good people in no way to blame for the fact that infanticide is the commonest crime among girls of the lower classes all over Europe? Turning to women of the higher classes, Anarchism points out that these, though not now shut up in harems, are still, married or single, unable to enjoy a tenth part of the liberty necessary to a healthy and happy existence. Anarchism forgets, however, that the chief reason against woman's en-

joyment of complete liberty in the streets is the continued brutality of the scum of the male sex; her restriction is here sometimes a result of necessity rather than one of convention. There are streets in Paris and London where it is unadvisable even for a strong *man* to venture unprotected.

Then comes the question of freedom with regard to woman's education. "There is not yet a single country in Europe," says M. Novikow, "where *all* the educational institutions are open to both sexes." There is not yet a single country where woman is considered as a human being possessing the full rights of a human being. Were there one such country, the question as to whether one school or another should be open to women would never arise. In some civilized countries it is still impossible for the ordinary woman to obtain higher education, and in others, where it is possible, she is still greatly harassed by the opposition of public opinion and public prejudice.

"Every woman," says Anarchy, "should have the full control of her own property and also of her house. She has it now in France as well as in England and America, but nowhere else! Catholicism is, as we have seen, also raising her voice for this reform. Anarchism would like to see all women allowed to serve as witnesses before the law; it would like to see women sitting on the juries of England; it argues that the most elementary idea of equity demands that half of every jury should be composed of women, especially when the crime to be considered is one which

has to do with both sexes. "Justice," cries M. Novikow, "is well known to limp in these cases. The men are often scandalously acquitted while the women are treated with the greatest severity." And these are cases where, if women formed part of the jury, the man too would have stricter justice meted out to him.

Anarchism would have women paid the same salaries as the men. M. Novikow gives a recent case of a Russian girl who, when detected working at a factory in the dress of a man, explained that she had found that by means of that disguise she could earn three times as much for the same work as when dressed as a woman. It is really surprising when we come to think of it, that such cases do not occur more frequently. When, as often happens, a woman has to support several children and an invalid husband by her earnings it seems hard indeed that her sex alone should be sufficient to disqualify her from receiving a man's wages. Civil and political rights ought never to be based on sex, but always on capacity, say the Anarchists. "A woman ought to have the right to become prime minister if she has the talents necessary for the fulfilment of that function."[1] Anarchism fights for the individual independently of sex, and it urges that when a woman is refused a high post merely on account of her sex, her dignity receives a cruel wound, and nothing is more probable than that she will be filled with hatred and bitterness as a consequence of such treatment.

[1] M. Novikow.

M. Novikow considers woman not only patriotic, but more of a patriot than man; he sees in her a most necessary aid to the peaceful conquest of one people by another, in the gradual assimilation of one nation to another, and while he attributes the widespread power of France during the eighteenth century to the influence of its women, he points to the political weakness of Turkey as a direct result of the seclusion and subjection of the Turkish woman.

Anarchism considers it a cruel brutality to shut woman out of political life. "We are forcing her to live in a species of mental isolation. What greater injury can we inflict upon a human being? At present, while woman is held outside the citadel, she looks on herself as an inferior creature, and abandons herself to stagnation of thought. And men too are quite willing that she should remain at this inferior level, but once give her political rights, and men will immediately perceive the necessity of instructing her. . . . In refusing political rights to women we are arresting their intellectual development."

Any wronged husband in France has a right to put his wife to death without the least fear of the law of the land. If French women once obtained the franchise there is no doubt that they would put a stop to this hideous injustice; and Anarchism thinks they would be right to use their power in that direction, for it cannot see why the wife should not have the same right as the husband. "True," it cries, "that a woman

by infidelity may introduce illegitimate inmates into the family and enable spurious heirs to rob the lawful ones of property and wealth, but may not a man by his infidelity introduce illegitimate inmates into *other* families and ruin their happiness and prosperity quite as thoroughly?"[1] Is the property of the rich so much more sacred than the honour of the poor?

"Many women," says M. Novikow, "are perfect dolls, and one constantly asks oneself if such creatures can have souls." But then he recollects that it is not nature but man himself who has turned these women into dolls. If one woman were a doll by nature, would it not necessarily follow that all of them would be dolls—unless indeed the dollish character be an individual trait? Anarchism has heard good Protestants and Catholics echo and re-echo the parrot-cry that if woman were not intellectually inferior to man there would have been, before this, examples of female genius equal to that of man. "How strange," said one of them,[2] "that there has never been a female Shakespeare!" "How remarkable," said another, "that there has never been a female Beethoven!" "And how truly surprising," cried a third, "that there has never been a female Burns, for Burns enjoyed less educational advantages than the average woman! And to be a Burns was open to every woman!" Anarchism has heard all these sage ejaculations and it answers them by asking the question,—"If all these

[1] M. Jean Grave. [2] Edmund Gosse.

men you mention had been brought up in harems what would have become of their genius?" What respectable girl of the lower classes in England or any other civilized country has ever enjoyed the *liberty of action* that was allowed to Burns? And what girl, with a past like that of Burns, would have had the drawing-rooms of the rich thrown open to her and had her failings overlooked on account of her genius? Would not the woman who started out to become a female Burns require infinitely more courage than Burns himself ever required? All who have studied the question without prejudice are perfectly aware that the difficulties which would lie before a female genius attempting to rise from the lower classes of society are infinitely greater than those which oppose the advancement of a male genius.

The parrot-cries of the Anarchist and the Socialist are often calculated to shock sensitive ears, but they have at least the advantage of virility, which many of ours have not; their cries are raised by men whose earnest wish it is to improve society; ours, for the most part, are raised by men who would cry "peace" where there is no peace, and whose one aim is to keep woman where she is.

CHAPTER XI

THE WORKING-WOMAN

SOCIALISTS and Anarchists are like the rest of the world in one respect at least, they see their own side of the question more clearly than they do any other. Those of them who have risen from the ranks through unspeakable hardship, toil and privation have much to excuse them for the one-sidedness of their views, while their lack of education is often a sufficient excuse for their limited horizons. Education is like a telescope, it enables us to see a great distance, but only on condition that we look through the right end; the cultured man who, having become embittered by failure and the injustice of his fellows, persists in looking through the wrong end, sees less clearly than the simple peasant who has nothing to depend on but the naked eye. It is easier to point out a social evil than it is to point out a safe and effectual remedy; the sufferings of the working-classes in all civilized lands during the last hundred years are in themselves a fact sufficiently terrible to account for the existence of the extremist views of the Socialist and even of the Social-anarchist; many of which, however, are as impossible as they are unreasonable.

Much has been done, and much is being done

in all countries, to alleviate the distressed condition of factory-workers, but such is the wretched position of hundreds of thousands of working men, women, and children to-day, that a true book could be written about their miseries which, without any exaggeration, would read like a description of hell itself. English Socialists appear to think that capital, or the capitalist, they are not quite sure which, is really the devil himself in disguise. Hence the ferocity of their attacks, and the venom of the epithets they hurl at their supposed enemy. The Social Democrats of Germany are more shrewd, they know that, at least for the present, the world could not get on without the capitalist, so they confine their attacks to an assault upon capitalism, and concentrate their forces upon an abstract term. One result of the efforts of English Socialists is that many capitalists are already finding themselves compelled to close their factories, and turn thousands of men out of work because those factories have not only ceased to bring in profit but are actually costing money.

High rates, introduced by good men who have the welfare of the poor very much at heart, are closing the factory door upon the workman and swelling the ranks of the unemployed. English capital is taking unto itself wings and fleeing to other climes.

English Socialists, true to our national character, are illogical; they rave at the injustice of letting the illegitimate child suffer for the sins of his parents, but they have no more compunction in ruining those who, by the chance of birth, have been brought

up in the lap of luxury and refinement than the mobs which, at the beginning of the last century, caused some of the most ingenious inventors of our factory machinery to die in poverty. They have right on their side when they fight for improvements of the lot of the servant girl, but are they justified in going to the extreme of ignoring the woes of their increasingly anxious and careworn mistresses? Would England really be better off without a *bourgeoisie?*

The lot of the working-woman has of late been studied and examined in a way that it has never been before, by philanthropists of every religious creed and by politicians of every party. There are people who wish to better her condition independently, and in spite of, the classes above her; there are others who wish to do so by means of these; while there are others again who wish to accomplish the same end on behalf of the upper classes, as much as on behalf of the poor women themselves. The kind of remedy proposed almost invariably bears the stamp of the proposer's point of view. The student who really wishes to reach the true solution of this great problem should examine without prejudice each individual remedy, and make an honest effort to look at the evil to be removed from the point of view from which the proposer of that remedy approached it. Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans, Nonconformists, Jews, Anarchists, Social Democrats, Christian Socialists, all have remedies to suggest for the alleviation of the miserable lot of the working-woman, and for the preservation of the family. German, French, English, Belgian, Russian, Austrian, Swiss,

Italian, Scandinavian and American writers have published their views on the subject.

One of the truest well-wishers and one of the most sedulous workers on their behalf is Frau Lily Braun, as her able work sufficiently testifies.[1] Yet her views are by no means those of the majority. This writer appears to look upon herself in the light of a social-politician, but further than that, her writings give no hint as to her religious faith or her adhesion to any particular party; and as I propose to put a few of her views before my readers, I am glad to know nothing more about her, that my treatment of her opinions may be impartial and absolutely unbiased. I have myself had many favourable opportunities of inspecting factory work and home industries in various countries, particularly in Russia, a country, by the way, of which the writer in question tells us very little, and I agree heartily with Frau Lily Braun when she says that the development of women's work through the introduction of machinery, in spite of all its accompanying evils, is one great step towards the emancipation of the female sex. Her views on the vexed question of married women in factories are of particular interest; she is fully alive to the disadvantages of which their presence in the factory is the direct cause, but she is convinced that every fresh restriction made by law on their behalf will increase rather than lessen those disadvantages. Married women are content to work for low pay because their aim is simply to add to what their husbands make, just as

[1] "Die Frauenfrage."

the young girls who live with their parents are content with low pay, because their earnings have only to pay for part of their expenses and not the whole; clearly then the young girl and the married woman are making the path of the single woman who has to depend on her earnings for her entire support and often for that of an aged parent as well, very hard indeed. The statistics gathered from many countries show that thousands of such women are still being paid for their work less than it costs them to live, and are therefore compelled to try and make up their incomes by overwork, by denying themselves necessary food, by living in unhealthy rooms, and, last but not least, by prostitution.

The presence of the married woman in the factory is both the cause and result of the lowness of her husband's wages; he is no longer regarded as the only bread-winner of the family, and the fact militates against an increase in his wages; wherever, too, women work in large numbers in factories the men's wages are exceptionally low. All the trades which give high wages are a monopoly of the male sex. Yet Frau Lily Braun is convinced that the increase of married women-workers in factories is rather a sign of their mental and spiritual development than of their deterioration. In most cases it is a wish to benefit their little ones that makes them go out to work, a wish to add a little brightness and comfort to the miserable home. It is not their working that is bad, but the conditions under which they work. Women are gradually being shut out of those factories where the work is liable to have poisonous

or injurious effects, and that is well, but how much better it would be if the men could also be shielded from these dangers. Those who have the welfare of the coming generation at heart should care for the health of the fathers as well as for that of the mothers. If the white lead glaze on our porcelain is injurious to the factory-worker, would it not be better for us to content ourselves with porcelain that is not glazed at all? I, for my part, have never been able to see why English ladies should hesitate about wearing birds in their hats, while they can take pleasure in the beautiful Venetian glass, the manufacture of which kills off the factory-workers in their prime. Surely the life of a human being is of more value than that of a bird!

Frau Braun is not alone when she considers that all forms of needlework in excess are particularly injurious to woman. Sedentary work which requires little or no concentration and allows the thoughts to wander aimlessly has a benumbing effect on the intellect, therefore machinery is doing her a good turn in taking that occupation more and more out of her hands. The factory girl who has to superintend machinery in the factory has to give it a far larger amount of attention than she gave to her needlework in the old days, and if only this were accompanied by the same proportion of bodily and mental exertion that the men get, woman's lot would indeed be improved. Seventy years ago Harriet Martineau expressed her surprise that men should have so little to say about the evil effects of needlework upon woman's health, while they had so much to say about the evils that

would result from giving her a better education. Needlework is, without doubt, one of the direct causes of the many failings characteristic of woman. Our author is quite right when she urges that women should be placed in surroundings where they can get rid of their artificial qualities in order that the way may be cleared for them to develop their natural ones.

A fierce warfare is waged by Frau Braun against all home industries—against all work that the poor do in their own homes or workshops for the pay of the capitalists. She is very severe upon the good, kind English ladies who wish to force the married woman out of the factory and let her do work at home instead. For the good of the public as well as for the welfare of the poor, she urges them to drop sentiment and look facts in the face. She reminds them of the dangers that attend the public through the spread of home industries, of the ways in which garments and other articles manufactured in the miserable homes can carry microbes and diseases of every kind into the homes of the rich. Then she looks at it from the other side and shows us how the poor who work at home are cutting their neighbours' throats, as it were, by working for too low a remuneration and thus cheapening the labour of those who work in the factories. The poor woman who formerly managed to knit one pair of socks in a day can now turn out twelve pairs by means of a portable knitting machine; she does not know the value of her work and is unable to demand a proper remuneration. Knitting and sewing machines are

forcing their way into the attics and the cellars of large towns, and even into the cottages far away in the country. Every machine that human hand can work is bought, hired or paid for by instalments. Machines of every description whiz in the miserable homes of the slaves of capital; you see the women bent double over them even among the mountains of Switzerland, and blooming little girls of the Swiss villages are being turned into flat-breasted pale workers, hardly to be distinguished from the factory-workers of the towns. Here, I do not altogether agree with Frau Lily Braun, for I have seen that the life of Swiss children is very hard even without the introduction of machines. The heavy weights they carry at a tender age and the hard bodily work that falls to their lot are also factors in making them look like grown up people before they have reached their teens. I once travelled on a Lake steamer with a party of Swiss Sunday school children from one of the most beautiful districts, who were going on their annual summer treat; not one of them had the face of a child; there was an expressionless, careworn look on every little face, and it made me sad to look at them. What use had the glorious mountain air and the exquisite scenery been to these little ones? They were not children, but little old men and women, wearied with the cares of life. In some Cantons the women work in the fields dressed like men and, when seen thus with pipe in mouth, are apt to be mistaken for men.[1]

We hear a great deal in these days about taking the

[1] In the north-west provinces of Spain most of the agricultural work is done by women. See chapter xiii.

people "back to the land," as though that were a sure method of curing all their ills, but my own observation, in many European countries, of those who have never left the land, leads me to fear that the remedy is a vain one, at least during the present state of society. There is a resigned hopelessness about the lives of the country poor, which is quite as painful in its way as that of those in the cities. I do not speak of model villages under the superintendence of rich philanthropists, but of the real country as it is in our day. It is the one wish of the young people in the most distant parts of our island to get away from the stagnation of life in the country. A poor woman's ambition for her little daughters is often that they shall go to work in a town; even those families who appear to have a comparatively happy lot, whose homesteads embrace, say, a couple of cows, and a little farmyard of chickens and pigs, are full of the same desire. In all of them there is a restless longing for something different, and they impart their feelings to me without reserve.

Then too there are the fisher-folk, whose lot in every country is quite as hard as that of the factory-worker, though the former are more resigned to their circumstances. A friend who visited the Faröe Islands in August 1906, has furnished me with the following interesting particulars about the wives of the Danish fishermen there. "The women are, physically, not nearly so fine as the men, and their life, mostly spent indoors in peat smoke, cannot be healthy. They are all very religious, but it is the *resignation* of religion which seems most to appeal to them. When one

talks to them there is a kind of hopelessness as regards storms, falls from precipices, and epidemics, which seems to amount to fatalism. It can only be the very strong who survive here, for, quite apart from the hardships to which *all* are exposed, the absolute ignorance of the laws of health is appalling. Every winter on the island of Baajs (where I have been living with a peasant family) there is an outbreak of diphtheria, and no wonder when one sees the arrangements for drinking water and smells the ditches and streams that run past the very doors. And they related to me a singular fact, that if a stranger is put into a bed recently vacated by a scarlet-fever patient he very often takes that disease! Then, as the doctor costs money, they usually send for a 'quack,' an old man of eighty-four, who considers himself very enlightened, because, after visiting numbers of infectious cases, he hangs up his infected clothing in an outhouse that serves as a larder—among all the food! The women here never attain their 'legal majority'; I mean no woman of any age, single, married or widow, can dispose of her capital without the consent of the men who act as 'guardians.' . . . They are certainly marvellously hard-working and strikingly contented; contentment and resignation seem to be the two points in their religion that appeal most to the women. They all do needlework beautifully, knit as they walk along, carry weights on their backs, look after the cows, and cook better than British labourers' wives: they make all their husbands' clothes and those of their numberless children, and can often pull an oar

in a heavy sea. In fact their accomplishments amaze one. Many women of sixty or sixty-two have not a grey hair in their heads, possibly because they never wear a hat. . . . It is curious to watch the poorest of the women spreading out split cod-fish to dry: they seldom seem to speak, and then apparently it is only a word about their work, whereas the men, as soon as they begin to row, chatter and talk incessantly, one can hear them from the shore. The women do not seem to have the energy to joke."

My friend also informs me that when a guest dines at a man's house his women-folk never think of sitting down to dinner with him, but stand, even if they are old women. It is agreed by all the more intelligent spirits of the island that three-fourths of the wrecks in that part are due to the drunkenness of the men, who are all of them fishermen more or less. My friend went through the experience of a hurricane, and described it as truly awe-inspiring to see the faces of the poor women as they crawled forth in their shawls to look out at the sea as soon as the wind would allow them to stand. There were some nine hundred men away with a fishing fleet. My correspondent concluded her letter with the information that some time ago there was a very slight agitation for Woman Suffrage on the Faröe Islands, or rather an attempt to arouse interest in the question, "but," she added, "every woman here to whom I have mentioned this subject is absolutely opposed to the idea." It is clear that the women of the Faröe Islands are mentally several stages behind the

country women of England, and there is a still greater gap between their stage of mental development and that of the ordinary English or German factory girl. The women of the Faröe Islands are still in that state of irresponsible semi-consciousness which, while it lasts, precludes all wish for improvement or progress; they are conscious of a relative, but not of their own individual, personality, and thus leave all the thinking to their men folk. It is not capitalism that has arrested their development, but needlework; and peat smoke too may have had something to do with their objection to the franchise.

Frau Lily Braun is a staunch enemy of capitalism; she is confident that as long as human motor power is cheaper for the enterpriser than steam or electricity, so long will he encourage home-industry—the bastard child of the factory, he will encourage it till it outgrows its own parent. Shops for the sale of ready-made clothing have sprung up since the middle of the nineteenth century like mushrooms in the night; they continually undersell one another by means of the sweated home industries, without which they could not exist. Capital makes no distinction between the worker and the machine, and is ever ready to grind a little more profit out of the former by making its employees buy the necessaries of life at its own shops and at its own price, or by paying labour with goods instead of with money. This is what we in England call the "truck system."

Capital cannot dispense with the work of women

in its factories as they are at present organised; it cannot dispense even with the work of the married woman; in many cases it has been found that the work of married women is more reliable than that of the unmarried. The former put more heart into their work and get through it more steadily and become more skilled than the latter, by whom it is looked upon simply as temporary occupation to fill up the time before marriage. Frau Braun does not suggest for a moment that any woman should be kept out of the factories, but she insists upon it that home-industries should be put a stop to, not by laws cruel in their suddenness, but by a gradual system of preventive laws based upon a definite plan, the first step being to forbid all combinations of the home with the workshop, and to make it illegal to give out work to be done in the home. Special workshops should be provided for the poor who now work in their homes, and these in themselves would be a great check to an evil which impedes social progress, both physical and intellectual. This writer, though evidently holding many views in common with the Social Democrats of her country, is also at one with some of the most ardent opponents of Socialism[1] in her belief that the first aim of those who would help the poor should be to help them to get rid of all feeling of subjection, even to trade unions, by inculcating self-respect and self reliance in place of cringing servility. She points out with earnestness how great is the harm done by philanthropic women of the *bourgeoisie*, who, by force of religion and

[1] See Le Bon, for instance.

custom have a fixed idea that philanthropic action, such as visiting, and caring for the sick, giving money to those who are in want, and taking them under their protection, are the means by which the poor are to be raised. These methods have the effect of weakening the feeling of justice, both in the giver and in the receiver, and blinding the latter to the truth that every working human being has a right to the means of existence. Our author is opposed in particular to many of our English philanthropic institutions, which, she says, encourage a baneful feeling of subjection and dependence. She disagrees with the views of the English Women's Federal Association with regard to factory-workers, and says that it was their ignorance of the needs of the poor that led them to demand equal rights for both sexes. She thinks that the Association in question has been guided too much by the requirements of individual women rather than by the actual needs of the many. Democratic Socialism, according to her, goes to the roots of an evil, while philanthropic women of the *bourgeoisie*, especially in England, are too much led by that which appeals to their feelings. She insists again and again on the fact that the cause of the working-woman is one of class more than of sex; and that every effort should be made to unite the men and the women in a strong pull and a long pull to better their own condition. Separating the sexes into two forces will only make them an easier prey to their common enemy. The cause of the woman is the cause of the man (as I have myself tried to show in my remarks on trade

unions), and the cause of the parents is the cause of the child.

Biologists talk much in these days about the increasing sexual specialisation of higher social development;[1] and scientists are beginning to ponder over the question how far feminising and masculinising should be allowed to continue unchecked. The probability is that circumstances resulting from irresistible changes in the conditions of life in all classes will prove stronger than those who may wish to check any particular line of development. Human life shows no signs of conforming more closely to biological principles than it has hitherto done, and if increased sexual divergence be one of them we may safely prophesy that it will have received many a rude check before the first half of the twentieth century is over. In this age of machinery and factories there is a distinct tendency of the sexes to approach one another both in the lower grades of society and in the higher. The unused qualities of the working-woman, as Frau Braun points out, are beginning to be developed, she is exercising muscles which have never before been brought into play, and she is being taught, what woman has always so sadly lacked, method. The physical powers of the working-man are, on the contrary, less and less required in proportion to the increasing perfection of machinery, and not only his physical force, but even his mental powers, are in less requisition, for the machines of which the management formerly demanded some skill are now many of them workable by the

[1] See J. Lionel Taylor, "Aspects of Social Evolution," 1904.

unskilled. And if we examine a higher class of society, that of the *petite bourgeoisie*, we find there no signs of increased sexual divergence, on the contrary, man's work and woman's work are now seldom to be distinguished from one another, and there is less distinction still between their tastes and pastimes.

Frau Braun does not believe that any real betterment of the condition of the men can result from societies founded under the auspices of the churches, with the aim of bringing about more amicable relations between capital and labour. She looks upon this class of philanthropy as a delusion and a snare, and has noted how such societies always decide everything in a way most favourable to the employer,[1] the persons for whose benefit these societies are ostensibly formed, that is the employees, never daring to utter an opinion contrary to those expressed by their employers. A society to promote kindlier feelings between mistresses and their lady-helps or "Frauleins" was recently founded in Berlin, but the lady-helps, we are informed, have not a word to say as to its management, resolutions being passed even in their absence! A Christian society for the organising of home-work in the same city was started in 1899, but according to Frau Braun, it threatens to run to pure philanthropy and turn the proletariat into serfs.

Frau Lily Braun has also given much careful

[1] I have heard the same complaint in Spain, where priests are often the presidents of clubs for working-men.

study to the servant question, and here again her attitude is one of defiance towards the employer. She tells us that much was said in Germany about the need for the improvement of the servant as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, but it was always for the sake of the masters and mistresses, rather than for the direct good of the servants themselves; she quotes Matilda Weaver, who wrote as late as 1886, that the badness of the servant was due to their not having been properly trained, and says that this opinion had the direful effect of making the employers more strict, and the servant's life more miserable, than before. Frau Braun urges that there are psychological, economical and moral reasons quite strong enough to account for the present scarcity of good servants, but she does not appear to realise that the feeling of caste is stronger, if anything, among the working classes than it is in the higher grades of society, and that there are *classes within classes* which are at first absolutely bewildering to an outsider. Germany has long been universally recognised as the country of caste *par excellence*, but there is no caste more marked in the world than that of the Parisian artisan, or that of the English factory girl. A young woman whose relations work in a factory loses caste if she becomes a domestic servant. I know cases where the old companions of such a girl at once drop the title of "Miss," and speak of her by her Christian name. Factory girls in England speak of one another as "ladies," and even a kitchen-maid will announce to her mistress the

arrival of a charwoman with the words "the lady has come, ma'am," but no factory girl looks upon a domestic servant as a lady. The caste feeling among factory-workers themselves is very strong, and will no doubt eventually raise obstacles to the levelling-up scheme of Socialism. A girl in a London pencil factory, who was threatened with consumption of the throat, caused by the pencil dust, refused point-blank to accept a comfortable situation as a domestic servant, which I had found for her with some difficulty, because "it would break mother's heart if I went into service." Yet the doctor had warned her that she was risking her life.

The finery of the English factory-girl is purely a means to an end. It invariably disappears at her marriage, sometimes more completely than the husband would wish. During the South African War a case came under my immediate notice. The marriage, to a respectable young fellow, of a good-looking factory-girl whose dainty appearance had been the envy of many of her companions was the case in point. Once the marriage ceremony over, all daintiness disappeared, and the poor husband learned to his bitter disappointment that he had married a slut. After a baby had appeared on the scene, it and its mother and the home presented such a miserable appearance that at length the husband, in a fit of despair, offered his services for South Africa. Soon after he got out there his regiment was broken up, and he was at liberty to return, but the thought of that wretched home

was too much for him, so he got work out there and did not return. There is no danger here of generalising from the particular or even from the average, as all who have worked among factory-girls can testify.

CHAPTER XII

GIRLS OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

THE average English girl's first object in choosing a profession is to make money. The idea that every woman who teaches children does so out of a special fondness for the little ones is absurd, as absurd as the idea that every woman who becomes a hospital nurse does so out of sympathy with the sick. The career of many a daughter in these days is decided upon by her parents entirely with regard to the cheapness of the training required and the amount of time that will have to be devoted to it. When a girl shows no particular talent or inclination for one pursuit more than another she is not likely to evince any particular enthusiasm in the calling chosen for her. On the other hand many girls who have a special bent are unable to follow it on account of the cost, and when the training is over they know there will come the anxious time of looking for a post. There are still very few professions in which a woman can expect to make as much money as a man would do in her place. In the teaching profession, as well as in almost every other, the difference between salaries of male and female teachers is very marked in all European countries, and even in America. In

Sweden the difference is that of one-half. Yet teaching is a profession that has always been open to women.

Many leaders of the woman movement firmly believe that the opposition that men have shown, and still show, to women entering the liberal professions is really a form of their "bitter cry" forced from them by the keen competition that already existed among themselves. If this be true, we can easily understand why Socialists and Anarchists have no objection to seeing women occupy posts that were formerly open only to men. Socialist and Anarchist propagandists are for the most part people who despair of being able to get posts for themselves; they have clearly less reason to fear the rivalry of women.

Those who are anxious that women should remain "womanly," and be satisfied with womanly occupations, overlook the fact that the more womanly the work the worse the pay and the more grinding and often humiliating the task. Where the parents have spent all their available funds on their sons, the daughters must of necessity choose a line of work that requires little skill and short training, and this means that they will have to work hard and get little pay for the rest of their lives unless they chance to marry. Yet how many families do we see around us where there is not enough money forthcoming even to give the sons a profession, and where the brothers are forced to begin life as office boys and work their way up as city clerks! Unless these are specially gifted with energy and push, their future

is anything but promising; years and years of toil are before them and one fortnight's holiday in twelve months. Thousands of them can never hope to make more than three hundred a year, and what prospects have these of ever being able to marry a girl of their own rank and support a family. Their sisters' lot is hard, but not harder than theirs.

There is nothing of promise for a young man to do in London in these days, unless he has powerful influence to back him or a father or an uncle who can take him into a business of some kind. The youths who courageously venture forth to try a new sphere are the ones who succeed, not the ones who stay at home and plod. Many feminists are apt to forget in their enthusiastic efforts to help the young woman, that the young man's difficulties have increased during the last few decades quite as rapidly as hers.

At first sight the woman movement among the middle classes seems to be entirely a fight of the one sex for the position and privileges of the other, an attempt on the part of woman to occupy man's sphere as well as her own, but if we look into the matter it becomes evident that the struggle for existence in our congested cities is growing desperate for the men as well as for the women; man is, moreover, as much hampered by the unsatisfactory position of women as she is herself. The father who finds his health failing and his grown-up daughters unmarried and unprovided for is not the person who will prevent their taking up the work for which they are found to be most fitted simply because it is less womanly

than another. The brother who, having his own wife and family to work for, finds himself unable to support his unmarried and homeless sisters, is not the man to refuse to let them take up the work for which they are best adapted.

Men may oppose woman's progress collectively, but they are no longer found opposing her individually, the time for that is past. If women would only keep this important fact before them I believe they would make their own path of progress far easier. It is less necessary to organise the middle-class woman into a force that shall resist the middle-class man, than it is to show the men that the women's interests are theirs too. Macaulay went to India in order that his sisters might not have to be governesses. But in these days of competition and rivalry, the average bachelor brother cannot support his sister even if he does go to India. The utmost he can usually do is to take her out there with him, and thus give her a better chance of finding a husband than she would get if she remained behind in England; and many a sister who is taken out to India returns to England after her brother's marriage without having bettered her own condition. Surely it would be less risky for her to learn a trade!

One reason why young men and young women continue to press towards the universities in spite of the fact that working for a degree leads to disappointment and breaks down health in so many cases, is that the young people have the laudable wish to better their position socially, and the gaining

of a university degree seems a great help in this direction. Next to that of wealth the chief class distinction in America is that of college and non-college, and though this distinction is not the chief one in European countries it plays a very prominent part. A friend writing to me from an American university town assures me that where the interests and culture are the same the feeling of class prejudice against the poor grows less and less. I hardly think there is another civilized country of which that can be said, except it be democratic Norway, but that little country, having become once more monarchical, will probably soon go the same way as the rest. Sweden, like Germany, is a land of strong class prejudice, and the Swedish woman, however "advanced," takes the rank of her father or husband, even if her profession be one that would give her a higher rank than that of her father, but because of her sex it cannot raise her as it would have raised her brother. She shares this sex disability with the women of most civilized countries.

English women are in the habit of flattering themselves on their superior status and privileges, but my travels in many climes have shown me that this feeling of satisfaction enjoyed by so many of my countrywomen is the result of an insular delusion. To begin with, the position of woman in the United States is infinitely more enviable. In no country does woman as a sex meet with more respect, except perhaps it be in Russia. In America, woman is, generally speaking, a queen, and man her devoted subject. In Russia man and woman

are comrades; in England man is the master. I would not, however, infer that in England man has the best of it; for to be a master or a mistress does not necessarily mean that your servant or slave is unselfishly devoted to your interests. There are ways in which a slave can twist a weak master round his little finger, and there are ways in which a servant can torment a mistress; there are ways, too, in which a subject may be guilty of treason towards a sovereign, and even comrades may betray one another's confidence. "It is in vain for a man to be born fortunate," said Dacier, "if he is not fortunate in his marriage."

The welfare and happiness of the two sexes are bound up together, and everything that affects the one affects the other. The true philosopher knows this, for he can see beneath the surface. But in these pressing times philosophers are rare, and those who talk the loudest and express their views with the greatest vehemence, though they do not pass their days in a state of mental apathy, are still often far from being philosophers; they are too often persons who content themselves with floating on the top of a question without attempting to fathom its real depth. Such people are caught by the parrot-cries of the first party with which they come in contact; and once their opinion is formed on a subject, men, as well as women, are very loath to change it, whereas in reality, an opinion, as Milton observed, is but knowledge in the making.

Those men who think that woman should be kept where she is, at any cost, who fear that her

zeal for her own development will lead her, if unchecked by man, to act in direct contradiction to the dictates of her nature, are strange scientists, and what is more, they are strangely blind to their own interests. They are, we may safely say, in every case, men whose women-folk have not been allowed free scope for natural development, they are men who have never had the opportunity of studying the effects of true emancipation upon a woman's nature. They are the husbands and brothers of women who have grown up in the chains of custom and prejudice, and who are too servile even to wish for liberty. The only free women of whom these men know anything at all are the woman who imitates male habits and male attire,—and the courtesan. They naturally shudder to break the chains of convention that bind their wives and sisters, lest their beloved ones should go the way of either of these; they are, above all, men whose women-folk are not obliged to work.

It is the women-folk of such men as I have alluded to above who are most opposed to any alteration in the status of women. They are like birds who have been hatched in cages, and who have never tried their wings, nor been tempted by ambition or necessity to wish to do so. If among their acquaintances there is a woman who earns her living, they take care to make apologies for her behind her back, and hint very openly that their friendly relations with her are actuated by a feeling of pity. The simple fact that they can afford to be

idle while she cannot, is like a wide sea between them and her, and they are conscious of their immense superiority. Such women have not sufficient mental stamina to hold opinions of their own, their highest wish is to be like other people; many of them feel that philanthropy is a safe outlet for their energies, and they rush into it with fury, for the sake of passing the time in an orthodox manner, and often for the opportunity it affords for social advancement. If they are unmarried they will not willingly own that they have ever heard of such a low topic as Woman's Suffrage. When that vulgar subject is broached in their presence they quickly explain that they know nothing whatever about it. If they are young widows they are vehement against all women who wish for rights; they will tell you with angelic sweetness that it is Heaven's will that the wife should ever be in subjection to her husband, and that their reverence for the Scriptures prevents them having any wish to alter the position which Christianity has assigned to women; they (the young widows) will tell you with great and unconcealed humility that woman is mentally, as well as physically, man's inferior. Yes, in the twentieth century there are, in England, thousands of middle-class women who firmly and gladly *believe* that anthropologists have proved that the normal woman must ever remain man's intellectual inferior. But this significant fact must be remembered; they are all women who have a man to stand between them and the world, or who hope to find a man who

will do so in the near future. They are profoundly conscious that the smallest suspicion of self-assertion on their part might ruin their chance of success in life, or, if they are matrons, that of their unmarried daughters.

The women who are most hostile to freedom are those who have staked their interests, or those of their daughters, in the matrimonial market. The English matron who desires to see her daughters well married, is as vehement against woman's rights as her daughters are themselves; she will allow her sons, while they are still at school, to talk in her presence of the mental superiority of man, and will actually assent when the youth asserts that woman is an inferior being. "The most hopeless of our opponents," say the leaders of woman's progress in America, "is that large class of women whose merits are not their own; who have acquired some influence in society, not by any noble thought they have framed and uttered, not by any great deed, but by the accident of having fathers and brothers, or husbands, whose wealth has elevated them." Themselves unused to any noble labour, either physical or mental, they naturally dread the introduction into society of a new element, which may establish the necessity of their being themselves energetic or efficient. To such women an intellectual female is a monster.[1]

Some have affirmed that all class prejudice is woman's affair, and that it would cease to exist but for her. If this be so the Socialists are wise

[1] See "History of Woman's Suffrage in America."

to try and gain her over to their views. We may confidently assert that no country, not even America, is entirely free from caste. A lady who has lived for many years in Australia told me that the polite touching of the cap, and other small homages of the English working classes, to the gentry, were pleasing to her on her return, after experiencing for so long the rough manners and unrefined ways of colonials, but that her son, born in Australia, and accustomed from his earliest years to colonial roughness, found the little politenesses of the lower classes in England painfully servile, he regarded them as a sign of a lack of dignity in the English poor. Yet even Australia and Canada are not free from class prejudice. There are, of course, cases where the female breadwinner making a great name for herself in art, or literature, or medicine, is able to secure a position in the world, a position that carries her above class prejudice, and makes even princesses glad to know her, but these are the exception. I have already alluded to this subject in a previous chapter, but have I dwelt with sufficient force upon the fact that class prejudice is perhaps the greatest enemy that women of the middle-classes have to contend with? It is this which drives them in shoals to the Universities, it is this which makes delicate girls overwork themselves and strain every nerve to keep up appearances, and often choose occupations for which they are entirely unfitted. If a young lady who had a taste for fancy-work, coupled with a capacity for business, could open a fancy-work bazaar for the benefit of her own pocket, without the risk of

being shunned or pitied for ever after by all her former friends, we should find that there would be many such bazaars, and their success would be proportionately as great as that of our Charity Bazaars themselves. The very girls who help to make Charity Bazaars a success would be the most successful, for they would turn their years of practice with a needle to a good account.

Pity is always plentiful in cases where young ladies of good social position are compelled to become dressmakers, or milliners through family misfortune; but pity is galling to the sensitive soul, especially when it comes from the companions of a woman's former prosperity. Guilds for distressed gentle-folk are all very well in their way, but the very fact that these should be required is a testimony to the existence of class prejudice, and false pride, and above all a testimony to the hide-bound views of those who are blind because they fear to see.

English girls of the middle classes are not yet thoroughly awake to the fact that they have before them a choice of occupations which is very nearly as wide as that which lies before their brothers. It would be hard to name a dozen callings that are now closed to the female sex. It is a sign of the way in which initiative has awaked in women of recent years, that we find them to-day engaged successfully in almost every calling on the face of the earth. They are earning their bread as civil-engineers, architects, surveyors, agriculturists, sea-captains, pilots, musical composers, band conductors, dramatists, poultry-raisers, bee-keepers, horticulturists, steeple-jacks,

barristers, physicians, surgeons and even house painters. In Berlin, of all places under the sun, there are female house decorators; they are said to have shown themselves particularly successful in the painting of artistic signboards which go far to beautify the streets of the German capital; these ladies wear, while at their work, blouses and knicker-bockers like those of their masculine colleagues, and what is still more important—they earn the same wages.[1] In the United States there were, in 1904, more than three thousand women preachers, one thousand lawyers, more than seven thousand women doctors, some seven hundred women dentists, nearly a thousand women commercial travellers, four hundred female electricians, forty-five lady *chauffeurs*, and a fair sprinkling of female grooms, stone-masons, tram-conductors, firemen, butchers and jockeys.[2]

Women have at last entered the financial world. America can boast that it has at least one woman engaged in business in Wall Street, a woman who can boast of business capacity combined with beauty of feature and elegance of form. Mrs Minnie M. Folliette is meeting with success in that centre of commercial activity in a line of work never before attempted by a woman. Mrs Folliette's first business enterprise was as a stock-broker in Cleveland, where she frequently handled from eighteen to twenty thousand shares a month. Desiring a larger field of operations this lady went to New York and there

[1] See "Almanack Feministe," 1900.

[2] See Ellen Key, "Ueber Liebe und Ehe," 1904.

collected information with regard to stocks. After twelve years' study of the subject she has now set up business with an office of her own and six assistants.[1] Another American lady, Miss Louise E. Hanck, who was admitted to the bar as an attorney and counsellor-at-law, has preferred to turn her attention to the practice of contractor and builder, and with a record of having built some thirty comfortable and convenient houses for satisfied customers, has now the honour of being the first woman to be admitted to the Master Carpenters' Association. Her story confirms the fact that women can be as successful as men in this department. It was once thought that no woman would ever choose the railroad as her sphere of usefulness, but now Miss Agnes M. Mullen, who began her business career as a typewriter in the General Passenger Agency Office of the Monon route, has now permanent charge of its advertising department, where she is highly valued on account of her business acumen and her comprehensive grasp of railway business. Miss Eva A. Weed is another of these enterprising American women; she holds the unique position of topographical draughtsman in the department of Taxes and Assessments in the Surveyor's office of New York City; her duties consist of the preparation of maps from deeds and surveys for the levying of the city taxes.

In Russia women pharmacists are opening chemists' shops in all the larger towns and meeting with encouraging success. I entered one which is prominently

[1] See the *Home Magazine*, July 1906.

situated in the very centre of the traffic in the Nevsky Prospect and found it a "dream of white." The lady-chemists all in white, served out the drugs standing behind white counters, the walls and the ceilings were also of the same snowy hue. I hear that a similar establishment has been opened by Russian lady-chemists at Paris and that it also is a dream of white, and is said in consequence to have "*un aspect tout à fait virginal.*" I am fairly confident that when these Russian women-chemists give their annual soirée the opposite sex will not be conspicuous by its absence, as was the case at the annual festival of England's lady-chemists, at which I had the honour of being present. England holds the palm for the separation of the sexes as far as white-skinned nations are concerned.

In the year 1900 the University of Berlin granted the diploma of a doctor of philosophy to Miss Eliza Steumann. This was the first time it had conceded such an honour to a woman.

There are women barristers in France, in Italy and in Switzerland, and hundreds of Russian women are studying for that position in Paris and other European centres. "Women are not yet allowed to practise at the Bar in Russia," replied a Russian lady when I questioned her on the subject in 1906. "But they will be very soon," she added, cheerfully, "and we wish to be ready." These are not disappointed old maids, but handsome young women who would grace any drawing-room. It was on June 30th, 1900, that French women were for the first time admitted to practise at the Bar. Mlle. Chauvin has

since been joined by two other ladies,[1] both of whom are remarkable for their attractive appearance and prepossessing manners. It is now an established fact that mental training, when undergone in a reasonable manner, increases rather than diminishes the charms of a beautiful woman. One of the most earnest objections men have made to the advancement of women has been that the development of their mental powers and their freer intercourse with men would result in the deterioration of their beauty, and to a diminution of their most valued feminine charms. But as M. Lourbet has so well pointed out,[2] ideas of beauty are capable of change like all other human ideas. The ancient Greeks prized beauty of form, independently of mental expression, but the twentieth century will see men demanding something more than mere plastic beauty in the woman who is to be their comrade through life. "And when a beautiful soul harmonises with a beautiful form, and the two are cast in one mould, that will be the fairest of sights to him who has an eye to contemplate the vision."[3]

"If liberty would diminish women's beauty, we should protest against their emancipation," cries M. Lourbet. And, indeed, there are few women who would not readily echo that cry. How long is it since pretty women showed signs of undervaluing their good looks?

[1] Madame Benezech, wife of the distinguished barrister of that name, and Mlle. Mille, were admitted to the Bar, Nov. 13, 1906.

[2] Jacques Lourbet, "Les Problemes des Sexes," 1900.

[3] Plato's "Republic," book iii., 447 B.C.

True culture does not consist in spending days and months in the vitiated air of libraries poring over books, nor does it consist in standing for long and weary hours in laboratories, nor in passing difficult examinations which are little more than useless memory tests. Because a few hundred women have passed through such ordeals and come forth pale and unstrung, it is supposed that this hasty cramming and over-work is culture! We are apt to forget that during the last thirty years almost every woman who has worked for a university degree has gathered knowledge with a view to exploiting it like any other merchandise, and with cruel necessity driving her all the time. Even at the present day women rarely allow themselves sufficient leisure to do their mental work pleasantly and agreeably. It is not the exercise of their minds that ruins their health and robs them of their good looks, but the mad way in which they set about it, and the tension under which they are, for one reason or another, compelled to work. Quiet and peaceful brain-work, under healthy conditions, rewards the student with "æsthetic sensations which tend to realise themselves in the expression of the countenance." A little more intelligence in the glance of a woman's eye will not spoil, but heighten beauty. "Erudition, which encumbers the memory, shuts the heart to poetry and drives away enthusiasm. Erudition may be inimical to beauty, but a healthily developed intellect will only serve to heighten a woman's charms."[1]

Overwork, and above all anxiety of every kind,

[1] Lourbet.

is as injurious to woman's health and beauty as it is to man's. I have already alluded to the sad loss of childish beauty occasioned to the little Swiss children by their hard manual labours. It is not work, but overwork, and worry under unhealthy conditions that tend to deteriorate our women, and through them the coming generations.

But to return to the subject of new openings for women. In England an organisation has recently been founded for the education of women as accountants. It is called The Institute of Accountants and Book-keepers, and is the pioneer of the movement for allowing women to enter the ranks of professional accountancy. The institute admits members of approved practical experience, or on passing examinations equivalent to those of the chartered accountants. It has already a membership of nearly three hundred, with branches in Bombay and South Africa.[1] Another line of work for women is that of Sanitary Inspectors. A year ago there were more than fifty female Sanitary Inspectors in the provinces, besides those of the metropolis, and their number has since then increased with great rapidity. This is a class of work in which patience, perseverence and, above all, tact, are indispensable. The salaries of this department range from £80 to £150 a year. Women Sanitary Inspectors in London work for about eight hours daily.[2] The Sanitary Authorities seldom appoint women under the age of twenty-five.

The American women who are making money in

[1] See *The Standard*, May 22, 1906.

[2] See article in *Lloyd's Weekly*, June 10, 1906.

the business world are, like most of the rich men of that country, people who have risen from the ranks. We have recently been told by one of themselves that they usually begin on the lowest rung of the social ladder. There are very few cases of English women having risen in this way. The air that English women breathe is too contaminated by convention, and the conviction that what is—must be. There is not enough of the oxygen of liberty in it to give their lungs a healthy expansion. An American girl has often been known to have begun with a salary of a pound a week, and found herself enjoying, at middle-age, an income of two thousand a year. "This is a long leap," says the writer above alluded to, "but women have taken it." A woman must prove that she has more than business ability to win such promotion, she must prove that she has tact, resource, and a power of strict reticence in matters of business. She must be so valuable that to replace her would entail serious inconvenience. "In the great steel company from which Mr Carnegie and others have derived so many millions, there are women employees amply trusted with secrets of business projects." There are also women employed in the Standard Oil, and other large corporations. As advertising agents, American women are, we are told, making from five hundred pounds to two thousand four hundred pounds a year. Women contractors in America do not hesitate to embark on enterprises involving enormous risks. It is not the business women who suffer from nervous prostration, but the idle society-butterflies and the foolish globe-trotters.

A great deal has been said about marriage, or the hope of marriage, hindering women from doing their best, and from throwing their full energies into their work. Marriage has been called Nature's handicap. Especially in connection with the fine arts, it has been said over and over again that women can never hope to reach the first rank. "I think," says one who has studied the subject, "that those women who persevere with the professional ranks are not as successful as one might have hoped. There are very few who come quite into the first rank. Taken altogether they do not hold their own with the men." There is found to be a want of energy, and, worst of all, a want of originality in the woman artist, and then there is also a want of muscular strength, even in painting pictures. "There are, too, very few women artists who command high prices. I doubt if a single one of them is making what would usually be called a large income."[1]

We are told, moreover, that only some twenty-five per cent. of our English artists are women, and that of them only a proportion of one woman to three men exhibit at the Royal Academy. Most of the women artists are practically amateurs, they do not need to make money, and they lack the greatest of all incentives to good work—ambition. The American girl has ambition. The average English girl has practically none, except as regards her marriage. What has been said about painting applies equally to sculpture. Among the beautiful jubilee presents presented by the various Catholic

[1] The Hon. John Collier, article in *The Majority*.

countries to Pope Leo X. was an exquisite life-size statue of St Peter in prison, in white marble. It was the work of a woman, and the gift of the Austrian Government. I shall never forget the pleasure afforded me by the contemplation of that beautiful example of woman's work. We find that in the English Society of Portrait Painters only two of the fifty members are women. Why are our women so inferior to our men in the art of portraiture? Here there are no artificial difficulties in the way, it is true, but there are the results of an artificial upbringing; the atmosphere of a girl's school is not the atmosphere to foster either ambition, energy, or initiative, it fosters plod and perseverance enough, but these alone will never make a successful portrait painter. The portrait must express the character of the sitter; it must be painted by one who has a sufficiently developed mentality to be competent to grasp the character of another. The soul of the sitter must shine out of the eyes of the portrait, and no woman whose soul is asleep can ever hope to interpret even the soul of a little child. The Englishwoman's soul is still asleep. I predict that the best women portrait painters of the twentieth century will be those who have breathed a freer air than the average Englishwoman breathes to-day. Perhaps they will be Finns or Australians! At any rate they will not be women who stake their all in trade unions; nor will they be of those who seek safety in numbers. The atmosphere of the English home, and even of the English High School, is one calculated to stifle the budding genius. To begin with,

English Head Mistresses—though often unmarried themselves—still consider it their pious duty to tell their pupils that motherhood is woman's highest destiny; and the pupils imbibing this doctrine continue—though they would never own it—to make matrimony their first aim, and other success in life has consequently to take a second place. In Finland and in Australia, as in America and Norway, the young girl is taught that woman's highest destiny is within the reach of every woman; that her highest destiny and her highest ideals depend, not on some man who may or may not come her way, but on *herself*; and that the highest ideal of womanhood is to be a true woman. The English girl is only too conscious that if she does not marry she will be regarded as a failure—though no one may say so in her presence. If she does not succeed in securing a husband and in propagating the race, she will have failed to reach the highest ideal that Christian England has been able to find for English women.

In Finland woman is looked upon as man's equivalent; in England she is still looked upon as his handmaid. But educated and cultured Finland has shaken off the trammels of the Lutheran doctrine concerning woman. Will England do the same? Will English Protestant divines rise up and tell our women that the truth shall make them free? If they do not do this; if they remain silent a few years longer, that which has happened in other Protestant countries will happen in England. Creeds that are made a pretext for keeping woman in subjection to man, are doomed to lose their power.

Catholicism has been forced by atheistic France to realise this truth, but English Protestantism remains blind to the danger which threatens it. The danger is, nevertheless, imminent. In a country where there are a million and a half more women than men it is worse than foolish to teach young girls that motherhood is their highest destiny. Such teaching if persisted in will lead to greater evils than we care to contemplate even at a distance. "Besides the sacred duties of motherhood, there are the equally sacred duties of fatherhood, yet man does not allow these latter to interfere with his mental growth. Men, indeed, "preach the doctrine of altruism and get their women to practise it."[1]

We hear much from Englishmen of woman's unnatural wish to be independent, yet, as a writer has recently observed, "Many parents know well how thankful they feel at the sight of the gay courage with which the daughters take their share of the family burden." "It is somewhat cruel so to underline the fact that the working-woman sometimes looks worn and tired, especially when it is remembered that a weary mother engaged in the lofty task of nursing her sick children, also bears visible tokens of anxiety upon her face. Surely when we deal with this woman's question, we should stop cavilling at the amazon regiments fighting for mere existence in the battle of life. They do their best and men should respect them, and not so often assure them that they are losing all their womanhood in the conflict." I imagine that the writer of

[1] R. E Hughes, "The Making of Citizens," 1902.

these words must be a woman. The following extract is from an article by Miss C. Smedley :—

"Polly P. has been brought up not only to put the kettle on, but to perform all household tasks under the guidance of her mother ; she is obedient and dutiful to an extent which precludes her having a will of her own ; and where ordinary youth is shirking responsibility, escaping home and generally having its fling, Polly is a model of domesticity. How will Polly meet her future lord and master? Not in the kitchen. Dances and tennis are the hunting-ground, and thither Polly's mother takes her.

"But do the gay young bachelors rush up to secure this treasure, trained from her infancy to minister to their comfort? Not a bit of it! The men flock round Maudie D. who has an eighteen-inch waist, wicked eyes, and a disrespectful tongue, and who has as little notion of cooking as of obedience to her parents. Now, is this fair to Polly? May not she, sitting with her mother or dancing with partners painfully procured by her parents, feel that, after all, there are two sides to a bargain, and while she has laudably fulfilled her's, man is scarcely acting in the same conscientious and self-immolating spirit? To the end of the world the woman whose negative virtues make her a pattern housekeeper and servant, will be passed over by that traitor man for the egotistical and irresponsible coquette! Can it be wondered therefore that girls of spirit and intelligence are beginning to realise that to concentrate on husband-hunting is to embark on the most precarious of all careers. As for the expression of fatigue which may be seen on the faces of the women returning home after a day's work, is not that exhaustion as plainly written on the faces of the wives and mothers of that class? All work tires ; the lot of the wife of the clerk whose salary totals thirty shillings or two pounds a week is not such a rosy one.

"Look at the train-loads of middle-aged, plain, unattractive, listless women, the wage earners, the independent sisters! Yes, look at them and realise they are the women who are superfluous for man's purpose, who used to be hidden in the

home of their more fortunate sisters, their drudges, 'old-maids,' over-worked and slighted, eating the bitter bread of charity. Now they are coming forth painfully winning a pittance, still jibed at as 'failures' and 'unnatural.' But the joy and pride of work is for their sisters who are following them; the drudgery of work has always been the lot of woman. There are those who wish to see her conscious of the joy of it; then, and then only, will the problem of the superfluous woman be solved. She will have her niche in the world, her self-respect, her pride, and her prosperity."

English women are not all clamouring for the parliamentary franchise, it is true, but they are showing unmistakable signs of dissatisfaction with regard to the disabilities of their sex, and that dissatisfaction is reflected daily in our newspapers. I could fill my pages with the complaints of anonymous female correspondents culled from our daily press; they are the sign of the times which no editor feels he can afford to pass over in silence. I will add one editorial note selected at random.

"As to the remark often heard that women are foolishly eager to exchange their highly-privileged position for a worse one, one of them replies, cogently enough, that women want to do away with the privilege of being shut out of all the paying professions and most of the trades. They offer to change places with the men as regards the Divorce Law. They ought to think it great fun to be respectfully denied university degrees which they earn, but they do not. The privileges of staying at home, doing nothing, and looking pretty, or of staying at home and toiling fourteen hours a day and not looking pretty —if you are the appendage of a man, and if you

are not, of starving in a garret—they feel to have been a little overdone."[1]

As Miss Jane Addams has remarked, it is so easy to be stupid, and to believe that things which used to exist still go on, long after they are past.

[1] *Public Opinion*, Oct. 26, 1906.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMAN

IF it were possible to dissect the minds of human beings and to find out as many facts concerning them as a biologist can find out about the physical organs of a frog, there would be less discussion as to what is the true nature of woman, and wherein her psychology differs from that of man. We should soon have the facts before us in black and white, and all who valued the truth and were open to conviction would come to an amicable agreement as to the meaning of the restlessness and discontent with their lot, as a sex, that women are evincing in almost every part of the world at the beginning of the twentieth century. If all is not well with woman, it is woman whom we must study in order to diagnose her complaint and administer an effective remedy.

We begin with the normal woman. We eagerly compare all that we have as yet been able to discover about the true nature of normal womanhood, with all that we have discovered about normal manhood. Are the thousands of educated women in Europe and in America, who are to-day straining every nerve to better the lot of their sex, acting in direct contradiction to the dictates of their

natures? Why is woman rebelling against her intellectual servitude? Why is she demanding civil and political rights only granted so far to the male sex? Why is she evincing such a craving for what has till now been considered men's work?

Biologists are telling us that the higher and more complicated the organism the wider must be the divergence between the sexes, that a healthy organism must be first manly, or womanly, throughout its entire development.[1] But who is to decide what is manly and what is womanly? Woman claims to-day that she has human rights far above any man-made regulations, and a destiny as vast as man's.[2] But while she clamours for justice man is calmly telling her that she does not know the meaning of the word. Woman is at length beginning to doubt the oft-repeated statement that she is morally man's superior, but intellectually his inferior. She is at last *beginning* to object to the maxim that immorality is man's privilege, and virtue woman's duty.[3] And now not only philosophers, but statesmen, politicians, professors, medical men, and Church dignitaries, bewildered by what is happening, have begun to study, in a way they never thought of doing before, the psychology of woman.

Is there, or is there not, a normal division of functions of the higher intelligence of human beings

[1] "Aspects of Social Evolution," J. L. Taylor, M.R.C.S., 1904.

[2] Auguste Maire, "La Question du Mariage."

[3] See Irma von Troll-Borostyani, "Die Gleichstellung der Geschlechster," 1888.

into two sexes, male and female? Is there really such a thing as sex of mind? Here is a question that has attracted and puzzled the greatest philosophers of all ages. Feijóo, who published his brilliant treatise, "In Defence of Woman," at Madrid in 1778, believed that the notion of sex in mind was a vulgar error which required to be dissipated by the light of reason. "Well may these women remain firm," he cried, "who say that the 'soul is neither male nor female,' because they are right." And before Feijóo's day a Jesuit, in a work entitled "An Examination of Vulgar Prejudices," declared that woman was in no way inferior to man as regards her capacity for the arts and sciences and for business of all kinds. "Aristotle," said Feijóo, "remarked that people with small heads were capable of the deepest reflection." "I conjecture," he adds, "that he took careful measurements of his own head before writing thus. Other philosophers vote in favour of large heads."

Almarico, a blind follower of Aristotle, announced that nature had originally intended that there should be no women, and that man was meant at first to live for ever in a state of innocence. The errors of this philosopher were very properly condemned by a Council of Paris in 1209, and the same Council prohibited the perusal of Aristotle's writings. Pope Gregory IX. confirmed this prohibition. Earlier still in the writings of Christian doctrine there appeared theologians who boldly asserted that in heaven all women would become men, and thus be perfected. St Augustine opposed this theory.[1] It is perfectly

[1] See Lib. 22 de Civit. Dei., c. 17.

clear to those who have taken the trouble to study the thoughts that great thinkers of all times have left us on the subject of women that they, one and all, perceived that there was something wrong somewhere. Feijóo saw no reason why one sex should be considered superior and the other inferior. "My task," he wrote, "is not to persuade that one sex has the advantage of the other, but that they are equal."[1] And here he followed Seneca, who considered that woman was man's equal in all the valuable qualities of the mind. "Quis autem dicat naturam maligne cum mulieribus ingeniis egisse, et virtutes illarum in arctum retraxisse."[2]

In a little country town in a secluded corner of Spain, five hours' carriage drive from the nearest railway station, I found a thoughtful, learned medical man, whose life is devoted to study and whose house is crowded with books. Somehow or other we drifted, in the course of our conversation, into the subject of the position of woman in the universe. "Ah," he said, "there is no doubt that the relative position of woman to man is changing somewhat, but it is quite certain, from what science has discovered with regard to her mental and physical qualities, and specially the latter, that she must always remain man's inferior both in mind and body." I listened with interest, and was trying to conjecture how and by what course of study this isolated philosopher had come to such decided conclusions, when he answered my look of interrogation with the words, "I have

[1] "Mi empeño no es persuadir la ventaja-sino la igualdad."
[2] In Consol: ad Martiam.

been reading the writings of a German scientist, the writings of Professor Möbius."

"And have you read no confutation of his theories," I asked quickly.

"No," he replied, with a look of surprise. It had never occurred to him that such an authority as Möbius could be contradicted, much less refuted! And then he began to tell me how difficult it was to get books in that out-of-the-way part of the world.

And what are the wonderful discoveries about the nature of woman by means of which Professor Möbius is convincing us that woman is where nature intended her to be, and that inferior to man she must ever remain? Three of his publications on the subject lie before me as I write.[1] I take one entitled "Geschlecht und Entartung" (Sex and Degeneration), a pamphlet obviously intended only for the masculine eye,—daringly unscientific nevertheless. The Professor has read carefully a great number of books, by men as well as by women, in favour of the woman movement, he has noted the rebellion of the women of his own country against their chains of subjection, and he has resolved to crush them—as he would crush a turning worm on his garden path—with his foot. He is clever, but more cunning than scientific. He prefaces the pamphlet in question with a few remarks on the manly man and the womanly woman,—here he betrays, by his very cunning, the motive that lies beneath all that he has to say on the subject in

[1] "Beiträge zur Lehre von den Geschlechts-Unterschiedenheiten," 1903-5-6.

question. He states, in short, his conviction that strict monogamy is contrary to the nature of a healthy man. In letting this cat out of the bag he gives us a clue to all his brutal diatribes against the amelioration of the lot of civilized woman. He is actuated by a growing dread (resulting from the perusal of much feministic literature) that "healthy" woman, if not put down at this critical juncture with the iron hand of scientific authority, may actually succeed in protecting her weaker sisters from the lust of "healthy" man—succeed in forcing upon man the unsavoury truth that what the mind wills the body can and must. Professor Möbius is clever enough to see the danger that threatens the liberty of man in the twentieth century, and is using all the artifice of which he is capable to frighten honest men from helping honest women in the coming struggle. He classes certain isolated male cases of disturbance of sex as Feministic, in the hope that those noble men who are tempted to take their stand by woman's side in the thick of the fight may quail before his coarse and diabolic insinuations. He hopes to take away their courage by instilling into their minds a terror of incurring the contempt of their fellows. Goldsmith said, "An Englishman fears contempt more than death." Möbius is trading on every man's dread of contempt. He suggests covertly that the man who has the courage of his convictions runs the risk of being mistaken for an abnormal specimen of humanity, an example of sex disturbance. Surely this arch hypocrite will not by so dastardly a means quell the enthusiasm of hale

and hearty fathers of flourishing families, though he has doubtless succeeded in chilling the budding enthusiasm of a few truly effeminate and egoistic German bachelors. But enthusiasm that can be thus checked would prove of little value, and might even be a hindrance to the cause of woman. In freeing her from such superfluous defenders, Möbius is only saving her from her worst friends after all.

And now we come to Professor Möbius' definition of a healthy woman. He says, "It is characteristic of the life of a healthy woman that its central point is the performance of her sexual functions. *Only things connected with her sexual life can arouse her interests. Only where her sexual being is involved does she show peculiar capacity or accomplish anything great.*" The italics are my own. With one stroke of his weighty pen Möbius warns every woman who does not wish to be condemned by the medical world as an example of "sex disturbance" that she must confine her enthusiasm, her mental energy, and all the ambition of which her soul is capable, to the narrow circle of doll-dressing during childhood, husband hunting during her maidenhood, and child producing and rearing during the whole of her after-life. "The maiden," he continues, "must lie in wait for a husband, but she must hide her longing, and in order to do this she will be compelled to dissimulate. Man's love," he says, "is like a flash of lightning, woman's, like a steadily burning flame. Monogamy, therefore, appeals far more to woman's nature than to man's. Man's love tires, but woman's never." Such is the verdict of a German scientist who is fully

conscious of the weight that his name lends to his words.

But let us ask Professor Möbius one little question —Where is the irrefutable proof that what *is* must always be?

The reader must disabuse his mind of the idea that Professor Möbius has anything new to tell us about either of the sexes. His new things, if we may borrow a phrase from Disraeli, are not true things, and his true things are not new things; besides which, his most interesting bits of information are drawn from the researches of other scientists whose word he takes on trust. Some have called him a woman-hater, but that is not the case; he is over fond of women if anything, but he wants to keep them as they are, hence his harsh criticism of every effort they make to throw off their so-called feminine weaknesses. He quotes statistics from Duchatelet and Lombroso, and labours to prove that the greater part of those unfortunate women who lead a life of prostitution are born with a strong bias to a criminal life. But he does not see in this truth a reason why their healthy and more fortunate sisters should shelter and protect them. He quotes Bunge,[1] who stated in 1900, after much research, that in the towns of Central Europe the majority of women were incapable of nursing their own children, and adds that this evil is hereditary,—like mothers, like daughters, from one generation to another, till the family is extinguished; and he adds, "We can,

[1] "Die zunahmende Unfähigkeit der Frauen ihre Kinder zu stillen." München, 1900.

with absolute certainty, conclude that if civilization and culture continue to step forward, as they are now doing, the nations will perish." Bunge has succeeded in tracing the last mentioned evil to its source, attributing it to a craving for, and over indulgence in, *alcohol.* He says that a woman whose father was an habitual drunkard can rarely nurse her own children, and that the capacity to do so is lost for ever to all succeeding generations. Möbius believes this last statement of Bunge's implicitly, and very possibly it may be true, but *where is the proof that our conjectures about posterity are correct?* Throughout his writings on sex Möbius constantly mistakes assertion for argument and conjecture for knowledge.

I must confess, however, in all justice to Möbius, that he has a sharp eye for the failings of the female sex, as they exist to-day, and it cannot do woman any harm, in fact it may do her much good, to see herself as Möbius sees her, and note where there is room for change and improvement. She need not let herself be imposed upon by any false reason he may be pleased to give for any particular failing. Each can think the reason out for herself after she has found out that the cap fits.

It is wonderful how many fallacies about the causes of female defects have at one time and another been stated by scientists, and, having been once stated, have been copied with docile servility by thousands of later writers. One by one, however, they are being refuted by incontrovertible fact. The fallacy about woman's respiratory organs differing from man's, to take a single instance, was

fossilized in Havelock Ellis's "Man and Woman," and accepted and repeated by hundreds of successive writers, male and female; yet we know now that the cause of the difference did not lie in the sex but in the corset, as B. Antonio Marco has satisfactorily proved.[1]

Then there is the fallacy about woman's brain having been proved to be intellectually inferior to man's. There are thousands of educated women in England to-day who believe implicitly in that fallacy, and what is very serious, make it their excuse for neither reading nor thinking. "It has been proved that our skulls are smaller than men's," said one of them to me, "and that the size of our brains and the quality of our brain power being inferior to man's we can never rise to the same intellectual height as men." But this lady could not inform me by whom all this had been proved, or how. Möbius takes up the same standpoint and argues as though anatomists had succeeded in measuring the relative brain power of the sexes; yet he has nothing more to found his conviction upon than the facts that Rüdinger, who dissected the brains of a number of new born infants, found the brain of the male infant to contain more circumvolutions than that of the female infant; and that Bischoff found, after weighing all he could get hold of, that the average weight of a woman's brain was less than that of a man's; yet Broca and others protested against the supposition

[1] See also "Das Weib und der Intellectualismus," by Oda Olberg, 1902.

that the weight of the brain had anything to do with the development of intelligence; and as for the fact of the circumvolutions of a man's brain being more numerous than those of a woman's, it is no more a convincing proof of man's intellectual superiority than is the fact of a cat's brain having more circumvolutions than any other animal's a sign of superior intelligence in a cat. All students of natural history are aware of the peculiarity of the cat's brain, but, as Soame has remarked, not one has urged it as a proof of superior intellectual capacity. It is astonishing, as Oda Olberg has pointed out, that Möbius does not refer to the researches of Eberstaller and Cunningham, while he lays so much stress on Rüdinger's observations, for their results are exactly the reverse of his, as regards the brains of new born infants. Mingazzini, who published a little book on the brain in relation to psychology, in 1895,[1] shows, as a result of his researches, that nature has made very little distinction between the brains of man and woman. Is this silence on the part of Möbius quite worthy of a distinguished representative of German research? If we examine history we find that there was practically no difference between the intellectual powers of men and women in the early days of civilization, and among modern savages we certainly find no intellectual superiority of one sex over the other. As Letourneau, Westermarck and others have pointed out, there has always been a division

[1] See Oda Olberg, who quotes from "Il cervello in relazione coi fenomeni psichici."

of labour between man and woman. Novikow goes so far as to say that the present subjection of woman is a result of this diversity of occupations, she having sunk in the estimation of man in proportion to her gradual exclusion from all the more intellectual pursuits. "Confined to despised occupations," says Novikow, "she has shared in the contempt that has attached itself to her work." And it is Westermarck, one of the most distinguished anthropologists of our day, who has told us, in his most recent book,[1] that progress in civilization has exercised an unfortunate influence on the position of woman by widening the gulf between the sexes, for, till the present day, the higher culture has been almost exclusively the prerogative of man.

And Darwin?—How came so great a thinker as Darwin to judge of woman's capacities for all time, by her past achievements, in the face of such truths as these! Liberty, as Lourbet has pointed out, is the mother of originality, not servitude.

More than one educated Englishman following Darwin has told me that woman's lack of originality in the past is a sure proof of her intellectual inferiority. Woman, in the eyes of the majority of Germans, Englishmen and Turks, is regarded primarily as a creature of sex; man, as a creature of mind, hence their real objection to granting her the civil and political rights which she is beginning to demand. Many women, too, still believe that woman is a "harp furnished by the Creator with only two

[1] "Moral Ideals."

strings, imagination and sentiment," as a Spanish poetess of the nineteenth century[1] has gracefully expressed it.

Möbius tells us that even the new cooking recipes and the new fashions in female dress are invented by men—a sign, he says, of woman's lack of independent thought. Yet Legouvé distinctly states that it is the women of France who have made Paris the world's citadel of good taste. He says it is a shame that young men should serve in the drapers' shops of Paris, when women have made the French drapers' shops the centre of European commerce that it is. "*Seules les femmes de France, artistes et énergiguement vivantes, ont disputé pied à pied ce domaine, et pour être plus sûres d'y avoir un rôle, elles se le sont crée. Oui, c'est leur génie inventif qui a doté le commerce naturel de la plus élégante de ses gloires. Si le goût français règne même chez nos ennemis, si nos fabricateurs d'ornaments d'ajustements rencontrent partout des disciples et nulle part des rivaux, à qui ce doit on ? Aux femmes.*"[2]

And the cooking recipes? Möbius has quite overlooked the fact that in many a household famed for culinary excellence the cooking is all done by women who invent plenty of excellent recipes, but who, from excessive modesty and diffidence, and absence of help and encouragement, fail to *publish* them. Möbius also lays it to woman's charge that all the new cooking utensils are invented by men, as if the fact that until now the whole art of making these

[1] Rosalia de Castro.

[2] Ernest Legouvé, "Histoire Morale des Femmes."

utensils has been monopolized by the male sex were not a sufficient explanation for women's lack of ingenuity in this line! When English women start making pots and kettles they will probably invent new kinds and improve upon those made by man, at least there is no proof to the contrary.

Englishmen are ever eager to admit that woman is morally man's superior, yet they are convinced that it is for the good of society that man should have the upper hand, a strange inconsistency! The fact is they believe that it is her very subjection that has brought about this moral superiority of character, and they prefer to let well alone.

It has been well said that the first step towards raising woman must be to raise her dignity, to raise her opinion of her own sex.[1] But what are students of woman telling her to do. "It is precisely by the august functions, and the terrible risks of maternity, that woman raises herself to man's level," says Turgeon.[2] Such words as these would only come from the lips of a Lutheran. No Catholic, no Socialist, no Anarchist would ever utter words so degrading to woman, and so specially insulting to the woman to whom circumstances have decreed a life of single blessedness. The mother of an illegitimate child has risen nearer to man's level, in the eyes of Turgeon, than the unmarried woman who has scorned to stoop so low. If this is all that Protestants can learn from the Bible without notes it might be better for them to read it with notes.

[1] Felix Remo, "L'Égalité des Sexes en Angleterre."
[2] "Le Feminism Français," vol. i. p. 124.

A Frenchman, writing of Napoleon's code, remarked "*Le code ne distingue la femme de l'homme que quand il s'agit de la frapper.*"

"Since when have women mixed themselves up with politics?" asked Napoleon of Madame de Staël.

"Since they began to be guillotined," was the lady's quick reply.

Mary Wollstonecraft, who spent half her life in teaching little girls, affirmed that if tin soldiers were given to them to play with in the first instance, in place of dolls, they would like them just as well. Devotion to a doll is not, moreover, the distinct peculiarity of little girls. I know a little boy of five, one of the manliest little fellows in the world, who told me that if he went to bed without his woolly bear doll he would feel lonely while his mother was down at supper. If her doll is a little girl's chief or only toy it is not surprising that she clings to it with affection. Seyler, in his study of woman, has given us the history of the doll. "As we know, Charles VI. of France was weak in the head. His *ennui* was driven away by the continual invention of fresh toys to attract his wandering attention. There came one day to France a man from Padua with a number of mules laden with boxes. His name was Pufello, and in these boxes he carried ninety-six little wooden dolls which he himself had carved and dressed to represent well known French and Roman woman characters. These dolls were greatly admired, Pufello found ready customers for them and was soon summoned to the French Court. Among the

dolls was one representing the Roman Empress Poppea, and this the King decided to buy, giving Pufello three hundred franks for it. Then dolls became the fashion and not only courtiers but also the *bourgeoisie* were soon eager to purchase them. There was soon a doll in the house of everybody who could afford the price of one, and as the King's doll was called Poppea all the others received the same name. From Poppea was derived poppée and poupeé, and in Germany the word became Puppe."[1]

No one will deny that laws and customs have greatly accentuated the original difference between man and woman. The women of Galicia who, on account of the emigration of their menfolk to South America, are compelled to devote themselves to agriculture, are as virile in their movements as some of our city clerks are effeminate. These women are remarkable for their splendid muscular development, for their untiring and cheerful energy, and, above all, for the enormous burdens which they can carry with ease upon their heads. Trained to it from her earliest infancy a Galician woman will often carry, on her head, from the town fountain to a third story flat as many as seventy large buckets of water in succession on a summer's day without evincing any sign of fatigue. I have seen a Galician woman trip unconcernedly down the street with a marble topped four legged table that would seat six persons, balanced jauntily on her head.

"The weight that our women carry on their heads

[1] Dr Emil Seyler, "Die Frau des xx. Jahrhunderts." Leipzig, 1900.

is atrocious," said one of their countrymen to me when I approached him on the subject; "our men could not do it—they carry everything upon their shoulders." I shall never forget the shock I experienced when, upon opening my bedroom door in a Galician hotel, I beheld the chamber maid who had brought me my early coffee standing at the top of the stairs with an iron bound cabin-sized travelling trunk upon her head; she had brought it up for a gentleman who had just arrived and was about to deposit it in his bedroom. What is more—she seemed in no hurry to deposit her load, but stood with her hands on her hips composedly talking to one of the other maids. The whole weight almost invariably rests, as in this case, upon the top of the head, and the hands are only used occasionally to steady it.

And what sort of brains have the Galician women? is a question that one naturally asks. The answer is unexpected. Their brain power is better developed than that of the men. The Galician woman of the working class is acknowledged by all who have had the opportunity of judging to be worth two of her men folk in every kind of work she undertakes. I have watched these women working in factories and I have watched them ploughing their fields: they are in every way equal to the men in their energy of both mind and body.

Some ten years ago the workmen employed in roofing a public edifice at Santiago struck for high wages. Their masters at once sent for a batch

of workmen from Portugal, but, lo and behold, when these arrived by train they were met at the Santiago railway station by a crowd composed entirely of the womenfolk of the strikers, who hurled stones at every man of them who attempted to alight. A fierce struggle ensued, with the result that the Portuguese workmen never got farther than the station, but returned to Portugal by the next train, and the strikers were taken on again at the wages they had demanded. So much for the determination of Galician women! The remarkable strength of their spines, necks and skulls is entirely due to continued practice. I once saw a baby of two years old being trained by its mother to stand with a little bundle on its head; every time it felt the weight it gave a scream, upon which the mother removed the bundle for a moment to replace it again almost immediately. There is a charming dignity of carriage about these women which is an inevitable result of the custom in question, they never stoop or slouch but hold themselves like queens.

In Sweden, Poland and Russia we see women employed as bricklayers and quite happy at their work, which is far less injurious to their health than the occupation of an English seamstress. Yet English women cry out with horror at the mere thought of the former, and take the latter as a matter of course. In some parts of Spain I have had my luggage carried from the hotels by female porters who rewarded me with a cheery smile when I dropped the usual tip into their brawny hands. No, I have

seen too much of the world to believe that the pronounced physical inferiority of woman to man which predominates in civilized countries is due to anything more than centuries of custom and prejudice. "Habits are produced from the exercise like to them," said Aristotle.[1] Even among women of the upper classes in England to-day there is a great difference between the physiques of those brought up in the country, and those brought up in towns.

How far the existing mental inferiority of the average woman to the average man is due to habit, training and customs, will be made clear when the same intellectual advantages have been enjoyed by both sexes for a couple of generations. At present the wisest of us have only conjecture to go upon. But as regards some of the other so-called characteristics of the sexes we need not wait so long. How absurd, for instance, is the charge so frequently brought against women, that they cannot, as a sex, keep a secret, when everybody knows that women have been employed for years with perfect success as secret police! Napoleon's code makes midwives as well as doctors and chemists punishable by law if they disclose secrets confided to them.

Möbius says that "lying" is woman's natural weapon, and that it would be foolish to wish to deprive her of it, seeing it would be impossible for her to get on without it. Possibly this statement may be perfectly true as regards the middle-class

[1] See his "Ethics."

women of Germany, but if it is, the sooner the German women are relieved from the necessity of telling lies the better it will be for the Fatherland. In France also the above quoted statement very probably holds good. "La femme française reste légalement assujettie; elle en profite à chaque occasion pour exploiter son seigneur et maître et y réussit singulièrement," wrote Mary A. Chéliga in 1900.[1]

I have before me a recent letter from an English lady residing in France in which she says, "I have never known a Frenchwoman who did not lie; they do so to get themselves out of difficulties, or to please the person they are talking to. They do not seem to think anything of it." Is it surprising that French and German women of a nobler mould should wince at the thought that untruthfulness has at last come to be classed as a natural trait of their sex?

Möbius tells us that courage is a trait uncalled for in women except in a case of defending her children, and he adds that this, like all other manly qualities, such as a desire for knowledge and a spirit of adventure, would interfere with her duties as a mother, and they have therefore been given to her only in very small doses. It is evident that he has forgotten that there are situations innumerable in which courage is quite as necessary to a woman as to a man. Imagine, for instance, the hospital nurses who follow our armies to the field of battle without courage! And what has history to teach us on this

[1] "Almanack Feministe."

point? As for a desire for knowledge, woman has for ages been supposed to have inherited that quality from her mother Eve, along with the three curses attached to it!! Why did Eve pluck the apple?

"Woman interests herself in persons more than in ideas, she is narrowly personal," says Henri Marion,[1] and this is a common charge which we cannot deny, but is it, or is it not, an innate quality, a sexual one? Many believe it to be not only inherent to the sex but one of the necessary traits of a true woman. "The man for society," they cry, "the woman for the man." Marion is sure, however, that no husband with a shadow of manliness about him would wish his wife to be absorbed in the worship of himself; but, he adds, that women are too often found to be lacking in patriotism through absorption in family affections and interests. But when was true patriotism ever found among slaves? And slaves the women of France are always to remain, according to Marion, for, in speaking of how women should be brought up, he says, "*il faut leur inspirer sans doute un esprit de subordination volontaire, et de sacrifice.*" The fact that he thinks it men's duty to inspire them with a spirit of subordination proves that the writer does not consider a spirit of subordination as natural to woman. It must be artificially instilled.

Have girls a greater aptitude for imitation than boys? It is generally admitted that they have. Marion remarks that whenever a play contains a

[1] "Psychologie de la Femme," 1905.

child's part, it is always a little girl who is chosen to perform it, but he forgets that the majority of little girls, especially in France, are always acting a part, more or less, from the moment they can walk, and run much more risk of being overdressed and made much of by strangers than is the case with little boys. I believe Mme. Necker de Saussure was perfectly right when she affirmed that (if brought up naturally without distinction) the two sexes were almost identical till the age of ten years. As the result of much personal observation and experience I have come to the conclusion that where no difference is made till that age by their parents, teachers and nurses, no perceptible difference exists either of temperament or of character that can truly be said to be a difference due to sex. I have constantly found a boy of ten far more sensitive than a girl of the same age. I believe further that it is a vulgar error to attribute greater sensitiveness to one sex than to the other. Sensitiveness, like many other traits thought to be more pronounced in women, should be attributed to individual temperament and not to sex. The error is easily accounted for when we remember that while men are taught from their infancy to restrain their feelings, it is considered woman's privilege to show hers. Michelet, who thought otherwise, was perhaps the worst enemy that French women have ever had, because he was an enemy in disguise. Catholics tell me that he was an arch calumniator of their religion, and if he treated the Catholic Church half as unjustly as he has treated woman he deserves the epithet. His lies are nauseating, and all the

more so because mixed with truth and clothed in such poetic language. Marion, like many others, has been infected by their subtle poison, hence his absurd remarks about the proper treatment of budding girlhood.[1]

It is generally acknowledged, in England at least, that women bear pain better than men. Lombroso and others are now explaining this by the statement that women are physically less sensitive, and that kind nature intended that it should be so. I await the verdict of medical women on this point, and therefore suspend my own judgment. When capable women shall have devoted as much study to the psychology of their sex as men have to the study of theirs, we shall have more material to form our opinions upon than we have at present. Surely, granted an equal amount of intelligent intuition and careful study, each sex should be its own truest exponent.

Marion tells us that love is woman's supreme interest throughout life, and, agreeing with Möbius, he is sure that nothing which is not connected with that passion, visibly or invisibly, can really interest her. There are English Members of Parliament who are quite of the same opinion. All I can say is, that in each case these gentlemen are either appropriating borrowed opinions, or they have formed their own from observation of the ladies of their own respective family circles. The sooner such ladies are allowed to have some other interest in life the better

[1] Many of these lies are well refuted by Gerhardt and Simon in "Mutterschaft und geistige Arbeit," 1902.

it will be for them — even if it be Woman's Suffrage!

We are told that women are more egoistic than men, and that they are infinitely more jealous. In the case of women for whom love is the only interest in life, this naturally follows.

Are women naturally ambitious? "Yes," replies Marion; "worldly ambition is very keen among them." He is right, women are ambitious for their menfolk, if not for themselves directly, provided they are endowed with sufficient intelligence. But in many cases a woman's ambition for her husband's worldly advancement clashes with his own cherished hopes, and ends by piloting him into a region of dangerous rocks. In such cases a woman is more ambitious than she is wise. Few unmarried women are so ambitious of honour in their own personal cases as to refuse a suitable marriage in order to gain it. There may be such cases, though none have as yet crossed my path. But with change of environment who shall say that there shall not also come a transformation in the nature of female ambition?

Marion and Möbius both assert that woman as a sex is incapable of independent thought. This is a serious charge to be laid at the door of half the human race in the twentieth century of the Christian era. Marion, like Möbius, goes so far as to approve of this functionary weakness as a token of true womanliness; and he adds that those women who do happen to be gifted with indomitable energy meet with little sympathy. He adds further that they lack not only initiative but the patience that is re-

quired in the execution of any work which is to attain perfection, and adds that, they begin well but few know how to finish. This is a true statement, and women should lay it to heart; but let them beware of falling into the error of believing these grave faults to be natural traits of their sex. If they look round they soon find that men, and even nations and races, are being accused of these very weaknesses.

Möbius tells us that all progress starts from man, but if this be true to-day, it does not therefore follow that it will be true to-morrow. Möbius goes so far as to tell us that had the world consisted entirely of individuals with only the characteristics of woman there would never have been any civilization at all. He says that woman sometimes does good as a drag to the man who would go too fast, but that she also hangs like lead upon the noble spirited man who ought to be freed from every hindrance that he may advance along the path of progress. Are all your lady friends of that type, Professor Möbius?

"Woman," says the same critic, "is incapable of self-control. Her tongue is her sword. Gossip gives her intense pleasure, it is her own peculiar sport. Her study consists in committing to memory, but she forgets quickly. Her mental sterility is in proportion to her parrot-like memory." Now the question for women to put to themselves is—How far are these qualities due to sex, and how far are they due to social conditions, and individual temperament?

Whenever an exceptional woman rises up and demands that man shall give woman free play to

unfold her true nature the masculine mind gives token of great uneasiness. There is a flutter in the male dovecots, and many tongues and pens are at once set in motion to show the awful danger to the State, and to the race, that might ensue were women allowed to mark out a line of conduct for herself.

Men have told women for centuries that she is morally their superior, but in reality they believe no such thing. No truly intelligent man could ever believe such a fallacy. Moral superiority, in the true sense of the word, would necessarily entail intellectual superiority. Morality entails definite principles, or springs of action, which have their source in reason. When men say that woman is morally their superior, they merely mean that her subordinate position is an effectual safeguard to her purity of action. And indeed while she rejoices in the characteristics of which we have been speaking it is perhaps just as well that, for her own good, she should be kept under lock and key. But how, we may well ask, is she to learn to swim without going into the water? How is she to free herself from those failings which subject her to man's contempt, and acquire those virtues which, till now, man has appropriated as his own peculiar property? "*Une belle femme qui a les qualités d'un honnête homme est ce qu'il y a au monde d'un commerce plus delicieux; l'on trouve en elle tout le mérite des deux sexes.*"[1] And may not even a *plain* woman benefit herself and her surroundings by appropriating the qualities of which

[1] La Bruyère.

La Bruyère was thinking? Even if it were discovered that the appropriation of noble qualities in place of despicable ones prevented some mothers of to-day from nurturing their own children, as Möbius would have us believe, that discovery would not account for the fact that in Austria only ten out of a hundred are able to perform that duty. The lower class women of that country are among the most backward, and the upper class among the most frivolous and empty headed, women of Europe. Overwork is as injurious to a man's brain as it is to a woman's. The brain is healthier when it is properly used than when it is left to rust. Yet Möbius looks on stagnation of intellect as a distinct advantage to a mother: he treats her from a strictly biological standpoint and sees no earthly use in her when she has brought her children through the earliest years of infancy. His contemptuous remarks about old women are calculated to make his female adherents (if he has any) commit suicide when they find themselves approaching the age of fifty. Möbius stakes all on the investigations of Lombroso. He states, for instance, that Lombroso has *proved* the intellectual inferiority of woman, but he is discreetly silent on the insignificant fact that the conclusions of this Italian scientist have been rejected by the greater number of those who have studied the subject in France, Germany and Spain, as well as in his own country. One of the most prominent of Lombroso's opponents is Baer.[1] "Lombroso

[1] See his monograph on the subject, and Dr Seyler's "Die Frau des xx. Jahrhunderts," 1900.

is a modern psychologist who is always bringing new and staggering discoveries into the market," says Dr Seyler; "he gives an example of this in his article in the *Forum* when he declares that 'Christopher Columbus was a "paranoiker" of the most dangerous kind, who ought in reality to have been confined in a mad-house.'" The thoughtful reader is tempted to wonder where Lombroso himself will end his days.

If women of the twentieth century become students of the psychology of the sexes they too may bring fresh theories into the scientific market.

But women may still thank Professor Möbius for his writings on their sex; it is possible after all for them to gain more than they lose by their perusal, for the first step towards an effective cure is to understand the disease. Most of the miserable failings which this Professor has detected in the women of Germany are only too plentiful among women all the world over. Women are in the main slaves to custom,—have no sense of honour, are frivolous, selfish, narrow, pigheaded, fond of dress, over fond of colour, deceptive, hysterical, cowardly, unjust, jealous, lacking in initiative and independent thought, servile, hard on one another, full of contempt for their sex, inconsequent, impatient, guided by the heart rather than by the head, etc. etc., but, happily for the progress of the race, there are to-day men as well as women who are determined that the female sex shall for the future be urged, encouraged and helped to drop these artificial qualities, and to replace them by

nobler ones. Committees of ways and means are rising up in all parts of the world. One of the schemes under consideration is that of co-education, which we propose to examine in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XIV

CO-EDUCATION OF THE SEXES

IN many countries co-education has been practised among the lower classes for more than one generation; not as a result of any high moral motive, but purely and simply as a matter of expedience, above all, for the sake of economy. This is particularly so in Norway, the poorest of European countries, where every farthing has to be carefully considered. In the backwoods of America, in villages where it is cheaper to have one school teacher than two, co-education of the children was in practice long before it was adopted in towns and in schools provided for children of a higher social grade.[1] In Wales, too, we have long had our communal schools for village children; but the question that is puzzling so many people to-day is whether the same system should, or should not, be universally adopted in the education of the *petite* and *haute bourgeoisie*. I use the French term because, for some reason or other, the English equivalent has been found to give offence to some democratic ears. Are the sons and daughters of medical men, university professors, army and navy officers,

[1] The French philosopher Condorcet was one of the pioneers of co-education—see Louis Frank.

merchants and millionaires to receive their education side by side in the same classroom from the same teacher?

The first thought that arises in the mind of the gentle English mother is one of horror at such a suggestion. "What!" she cries, "are my manly little boys to go to school with *girls?* Are they to have all their masculine qualities repressed and their boyish play interdicted that they may become fit associates for girls? Is leap-frog to be supplanted by the skipping-rope? And shall our glorious Eton and Harrow, our Winchester and our Wellington, be modelled henceforth on the plan of a boarding-school for young ladies! What, indeed, will be the fate of Britain if her sons, who have vowed they never will be slaves, are turned into women! "But think of your daughters too," someone mildly suggests. "Will it not be good for them to have the same advantages as their brothers, to have their minds broadened and their physique improved by the healthful atmosphere of a boy's public school?"

"What!" cries the same gentle mother in even greater horror than before. "Are my sweet little girls to be turned out boys? to lose their winning ways and their pretty manners by daily contact with rough and rude schoolboys! The thing is out of the question. It is monstrous. Am I to live to see my darling Arabella stride into the drawing-room like a man, her hair unkempt and her dress neglected. Am I to hear school-boy slang from her girlish lips, and, what is worst of all, see her health give way under the pressure of Latin and Greek examinations,

through useless emulation of masculine intellect? Heaven preserve my children from such a fate."

To all this we would reply. Let the gentle mother in question ask herself whether there is absolutely no room for improvement in the present system of education for boys, as well as girls, in England,—whether our girls and boys are turned out of existing educational machines such perfect types of men and women as to leave no room for improvement. Let her give a few hours to the study of the female character as it is portrayed by Möbius. Let her ask herself whether her sons would be any the worse for assimilating some of their sisters' feminine qualities—modesty for instance. Modesty has always been considered to be a pre-eminently feminine quality. Pliny went so far as to state that female corpses float down a river face downwards "*veluti pudori defunctarum parcente naturæ*," while male corpses invariably float on their backs. Her modesty is said to be woman's greatest safeguard, and certainly not even the upholders of co-education would wish her to be deprived of it. Nevertheless, it is in reality an acquired trait,[1] absent among the women of many savage peoples. If it has been so extensively acquired by women as to be mistaken for a sexual characteristic, since the days of Pliny, by all means let men acquire it too. Is not modesty one of the attributes of greatness of soul? Feijóo[2] pointed out in the eighteenth century that a little more

[1] See G. Archdall Reid "The Principles of Heredity," 1905

[2] See his "Defensa de las Mujeres."

modesty in men as to their intellectual superiority over women would not do them any harm. "St Thomas," he says, "speaking of presumption, remarks that this vice is always founded on some error of the understanding, and that putting the world straight as regards woman's intellectual capacities would not add presumption to *her* list of faults but would remove it from man's." It is worthy of note, moreover, that Feijóo was a native of Galicia, a province of Spain that has been famous for centuries as well for the *creative* musical and poetical genius of its women,[1] as for their remarkable superiority to their men folk in both mental and physical energy. In the spring of the year 1907, I came across an earnest English Protestant Missionary conscientiously using all the eloquence at his disposal to show the fishermen on the Galician coast that their women ought to be put down a peg. "The Bible teaches us," he said, "that the woman should be number two, but with you Gallegan fishermen she is number one." I was going to murmur something about putting the clock back, when the Missionary's young daughter interrupted me by exclaiming, "The women here actually take hold of their husbands and shake them!"

"How dreadful!" I exclaimed.

It is quite clear that among the lower classes in Galicia co-education might instil more manly

[1] See Sarmiento "Memorias para la historia de la Poesia y Poetas Españolas." "Ellas son las que componen las coplas sin artificio alguno y ellas inventan los tonos ò aires à que las han de cantar."

courage into the man and more modesty into the woman. But let us put the question seriously, "Would co-education in secondary schools rob our English boys of their manliness? Would it really result in effeminizing the British youth? Yes, without doubt, if co-education means sending our boys to be educated at their sisters' boarding-schools, especially to such schools as they exist to-day.

But in this chapter we are not treating of boarding-schools, either for boys or for girls. We do not wish to do away with all such institutions with one clean sweep, but we should like to see their number gradually diminish and their place taken by first-class co-educational day schools. There has been much talk of late about the desirability of regalvanizing our grammar schools. Yes, by all means let them be regalvanized, let their building premises be enlarged, let them be adapted for the conjoint education of both sexes. The British boarding-school is a hotbed of narrowness, exclusiveness, and pettiness if of nothing worse. It fosters the self-satisfied undemocratic spirit which to-day threatens ruin to our Empire.

Let the middle class mother ask herself, not, whether attending the same classes as his sister will rob her son of his manliness, but whether her boy is growing up manly enough. At what sort of a school was that boy educated, who, on finding himself a parent in his turn, wrote to a daily paper as follows:—

"SIR,—Many parents of the middle class have been puzzled

like myself with the problem 'what shall we do with our sons.' Why cannot we have a 'gentleman's corps' where social position would be recognised as a qualification for entrance? Many sons of professional men and others of the upper middle class would join such a corps as privates, if they were sure of meeting men of their own position."[1]—TITUS.

From what, we would ask, is this loving parent so anxious to protect his tender sons? Is there not something effeminate about his very anxiety? If co-education were suggested for his darlings, would he not, in all probability, be laid low by a violent attack of hysteria? This disease, by the way, is common to both sexes. Workmen, sailors, and even military men, have before now fallen victims to hysteria.[2] Doctors tell us that smoking and alcoholic drinks are among the causes of hysteria among boys, robbing them, to begin with, of that manliest of all manly qualities, the art of self-control. Co-education will not weaken a boy's powers of self-control, but strengthen them.

[1] This letter appeared in the *Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 29, 1905.

[2] "Was den Beruf oder Stand der von Hysterie am meisten befallenen Individuen anbelangt, so berichtet Ziehen, dass beim weiblichen Geschlecht die verkehrt Erzogenen, nur auf Romane und sinnliche Zerstreuungen denkenden, beschäftigungslosen Damen der besten Stände, dann Arbeiterinnen und Prostituirte überwiegen; bei den männlichen Geschlechte soll aber die Hysterie am häufigsten bei Arbeitern, Matrosen, nach Coleri bei Vagabunden und Bettlern, nach Dupouchel, Gilles de La Tourette, etc., auch beim Militär vorkommen." Dr Emil Segler, "Die Frau des xx. Jahrhunderts." Leipzig, 1900. And the same writer adds a little later, "am schwersten ist es, wie Ziehen bemerkt, die Hysteriker gegen Affecte abzuhärten, da die Kunst der Selbst-beherrschung—Folge einer mangelhaften Erziehung—doch dem grössten Theile unserer sogar gesunden und modernen Jugend vollkommen abgeht."

Let us suppose that the middle-class girls and boys of a county town are educated at the same grammar school. The girls will of course enter by their own door, through their own cloakrooms, and the boys by theirs. The boys' play-ground will be separate from that of the girls. But once in school, under the eye of a watchful teacher, boy and girl will work side by side, and in the class-room their will be no distinction made between the sexes. If the girls are quicker than the boys, and more eager to learn, as so many teachers assert, a little wholesome emulation will not harm the boys.

A Russian lady, who has since 1901 been carrying on a co-educational school for the children of upper-class families at Kieff (modelled on those of England and America), took me over the establishment in 1904. I found forty-five children, twenty girls, and twenty-five boys. At this school, to which a kindergarten is attached, the children of both sexes remain till the age of fourteen, but my friend hoped that the Minister of the Interior would soon extend the age to fifteen. In this school the sexes are never separated for work or for play, but never under any circumstances are they left without the supervision of a teacher. School begins at nine o'clock, and the school hours, playtime included, cover six hours in all. There are never more than fifteen in a class, generally less. Neither marks nor prizes are given, but there is an exhibition of each pupil's work once a year. The desks and stools have, like many other things in the school, been taken from American models.

"There is not a trace of coquetry in my girls," said their mistress smiling, "flirtation is out of the question when boys and girls are brought up together. I do not deny that romping with their boy schoolfellows rubs off a little of their girlish gentleness, but the gain far outweighs the loss. As for my boys, they learn from the first that the accident of sex is no disqualification to a woman, and when they grow to manhood they will not turn into tyrants nor petty despots, their women folk will be their comrades and their friends."

On another occasion I discussed the subject with a charming young Danish lady who was educated at a co-educational school till the age of fourteen, and pursued her studies at home with a governess till the age of eighteen, when she took the full University course at Copenhagen University, working side by side with the male students. This lady, in answer to my questions as to her views on co-education, told me that she believed in it thoroughly. "The mistake is," she said, "to think that the sexes should be separated from the age of thirteen or fourteen till entrance in the University. *There should be no separation.*[1] Boy and girl should work together right on from the kindergarten to the close of the university course. With proper supervision such a line of education must prove highly satisfactory

[1] "The bald fact must be recognised that between the asexual or hermaphroditic period of childhood, and that of the fully-sexed manhood and womanhood there is a period, long or short, when blood runs warm and hearts beat fast. It is then that a youth rightly looks to age for guidance and restraint. It is just this period of adjustment that needs frank teaching and skilful handling. This period needs no

for both sexes. It is not the boys and girls who have grown up with these advantages who go in for silly love affairs at a premature age, it is those who have never had the chance of learning how to behave in each other's company. The boy who has learned to respect all girls as he respects his sister has learned a lesson that will be useful to him through life, and to all the women with whom he is eventually thrown in contact."—It is very rarely, if ever, that a man in our country marries one of the girls with whom he has been educated," she added, smiling.

If the English mother fears lest co-education may rob her sons of their manliness, why is she so opposed to the introduction of compulsory military training for every male Briton? Surely that would prove an effectual antidote to the effeminacy she so much dreads. Is it perhaps because her anxious heart fails to see the distinction between compulsory training and compulsory service? "We hear much nowadays upon the question of physical degeneration," writes a patriotic Englishman; "I wonder whether the anti-conscriptionists have ever considered the effect that a few years' discipline, regular living, and steady drilling would have upon the many round-shouldered weaklings we have about us to-day?"—"Compulsory military training would teach our youth discipline, obedience, self-control, self-respect,"

seclusion. To separate the one sex from the other increases the sexual tension. Let boy and girl look in each other's eyes frankly and truthfully, not slyly and surreptitiously. Once this frank look of sex on sex has occurred, there is no fear for the future." R. E. Hughes, M.A., Oxon., "The Making of Citizens," 1902.

writes another, who has thought deeply on the subject, and he adds, "It would greatly improve the physical and general health of the whole nation." An English lady who returned to England from India in 1906, after an absence of several years, told me that it distressed her to see the slouching gait and the degenerate appearance of the Englishmen in our streets. They constitute," she said earnestly, "by their appearance alone, the most eloquent of pleas for compulsory military training." And a year before, a South African colonel, writing to the papers on the same subject, said, "Undeniably we have lost the taste for military service; it is equally true that we have degenerated physically . . . one has only to walk through the streets of London to observe how anæmic-looking, weak, and round-shouldered the majority of the men are. . . . The best, indeed the only way to remedy such physical weakness is to compel men to drill. The word 'compel' has an ugly sound to freedom-loving people, but we English have become used to it lately. Have we not compulsory vaccination, compulsory education, why not compulsory drill?" The same writer heard a Dutchman say of some of the militiamen we sent out to South Africa, "These little boys ought to be at home; they are no good." And we hear on all sides that the average officer in the British army is looked upon as "a pampered amateur, a soft sort of imitation of the real thing."[1]

To many English people the word co-education,

[1] See correspondence on this subject in *The Daily Telegraph*, Sept. 1905.

like the phrase compulsory military service, is a red rag to a bull, but the former need not necessarily mean making girls boyish, or boys girlish, and the latter does not necessarily involve universal registration, nor three years' service in barracks. "For every youth in this country to go through sufficient service in either navy, army, militia, or volunteers, in order to make himself an efficient citizen involves no hardship for anyone. . . . It would be much more amusing than watching other people play football."[1]

If the British mother of to-day blindly refuses to let her boys receive a military training it is because the poor woman had in her day no education but that afforded by our typical boarding-schools for girls. Let us give our girls the benefits of a wider outlook, let us educate them with our boys. Let us instil into our children of both sexes the duty of patriotism, of self-control, of courage, of self-sacrifice. Some of our girls will have to fight the battle of life unaided by any manly arm, by any masculine counsel. Some of our boys will owe success or failure to the self-control and courage of wife, sister, or daughter. All the essential virtues of man or woman are equally needed for the happiness and welfare of the human family. Let us purify the atmosphere of our boys' schools, let us make it fit for their sisters to breathe. If our present centres of education are not suited for the teaching of boys and girls together, let us make them suitable; and then, when the girls, by intercourse with companions of the opposite sex, have

[1] See letter in *Glasgow Herald*, Aug. 22, 1905.

become more courageous, they will not be likely to take from the boys the manliness they already have. No, their own standard of true manliness having been raised, they will demand greater things of their male comrades and later, of their husbands and sons, even though these greater things involve compulsory military training.

"How can the nation be made to understand that its existence depends on its attitude toward military service?" asks Major-General Colville, and he adds, "The day will come when strangers will teach us what we cannot learn by ourselves." And it was Lord Kitchener, who, writing from India on the same subject, said, "Are we sure that with our present system we shall be able to discharge the heavy obligation which will devolve upon us? If I thought it possible I would gladly say so, but I am convinced that such is not the case." Let co-education and compulsory military service be introduced simultaneously, and very soon Great Britain will have cause to be thankful for nobler minded women and manlier men.

M. Turgeon, who appears to have read widely on the subject of co-education, thinks that the introduction of the system into France would be fatal to the morals of that country. But surely it would be difficult to make French morals worse than they are at present. What has the separation of the sexes until marriage done for France? Is there really something in the French temperament that would make the co-education of the sexes utterly impracticable? The anchorites who withdrew from the world, in the early days of Christianity, to live on bread and

water in the desert, did it that they might prove by their own lives that a pure life was not an impossibility, even to an Asiatic in a southern clime. These anchorites were Asiatic Christians. What was possible for Asiatics in the early days of Christianity should be possible for French Christians in the twentieth century. If French boys are not fit at present to mingle with girl comrades in the classroom and the lecture hall, let their parents and teachers set about making them so. If their Latin temperament is unruly let them be taught to master it, that they may not grow up to be its slave. Even Turgeon owns that the French boarding-school is one of the curses of France. But the weak spot in his determined opposition to the system of co-education is that he ridicules the arguments that have been brought forward in favour of it when he finds himself powerless to refute them.

It has been suggested that co-education will favour marriage, and in one way it certainly will do so. The boy who has grown up among girl comrades should be much more likely both to choose wisely and to make a good husband to the woman of his choice, yet Turgeon thinks otherwise, "*L'expérience atteste*," he asserts, "*que dans tous les pays, où fleurit la co-education, le divorce sévit plus que partout ailleurs.*" He has merely overlooked the statistics of divorce in his own country! He goes on to assert that both catholics and liberals are opposed to co-education, but he forgets that the idea is still a new one to many thinkers, and that every reform meets with opposition at first. Opposition proves nothing.

Another of M. Turgeon's arguments against co-education is that girls are naturally infinitely more precocious than boys, that between the ages of twelve and sixteen a girl comes suddenly to maturity, both of body and mind, like a flower opening in the sunshine, while a boy's development is slow and steady. Here Turgeon is simply quoting Marion, who in his turn quoted Michelet; and Michelet's rhapsodic studies were not taken from normal healthy girlhood — he knew nothing of the healthy farmer's daughter and the factory girl. There is no jump into womanhood which need prove an obstacle to co-education, though it is true that there may always be delicate girls and delicate boys for whom quiet study at home with a governess or tutor will be more beneficial than school education. It was M. Marion who asserted that girls tell lies for the pleasure of lying.[1] If that psychologist had lived for a few months in Spain, he would have learned by experience that boys find equal pleasure in that pastime. The Spaniard tells a lie as readily as he draws his breath; his women folk cannot compete with him there.

Some people are afraid that co-education will involve too great a taxation of a girl's brain. But this need not be so. There is no reason why, in a class composed of boys and girls, a judicious teacher need grind more work out of individual pupils than is good for them. It is the present system of cramming for examinations, particularly as it is carried on in our High Schools for girls, which is bad. Why should we wish every child in a particular class

[1] "Psychologie de la Femme."

to answer, after long months of hard work, a fixed number of questions, in a fixed manner, within a fixed limit of time, on a fixed day; and then stamp upon each young heart a fatal conviction of failure or success according to the results of that particular ordeal? Is this the way to develop intellectual personality? Is this the way to prepare young warriors for the battle of life?

I hear that the first trial of co-education in Swiss secondary schools met with very poor success and was abolished in consequence, but that now a fresh start is being made, and that a secondary school for boys and girls together is shortly to be opened at Lausanne.

In a few of the older towns of the United States co-education continues to be as strenuously opposed as ever, otherwise it is highly approved of all over the country, and the system begun in the infant school is continued through school and college.

In Germany, where women are waking up so amazingly, there is still very little talk of so bold an innovation as the co-education of the sexes, and all but the boldest pioneers still believe that there is a wide and impassable gulf between the psychology of man and woman. "*Beim Manne herrscht der Wille und Verstand vor, bei der Frau Gemut und Empfindung; darum ist der Mann für Gründe zugänglich, denkt folgerichtig und logisch; die Frau dagegen ist für Eindrücke empfänglich und ist sprunghaft und unlogisch,*" wrote a German catholic divine in 1902, and he was only expressing what Germany believes to be the truth. The sooner co-education

is introduced into the Fatherland the better, that the men may be freed from their supreme self-satisfaction, and the women from their blind ignorance of their own capabilities.

Russians are crying out for justice to their women. All over that vast Empire there is a movement on the part of the men to demand for their women the same civil and political rights they are demanding for themselves. Co-education is perhaps less imperatively needed in the Empire of the Czar than it is in the British Empire.

In France, in spite of all that Turgeon may say, co-education has many partisans among the intellectual and the learned. Lourbet, to a certain extent, writes eloquently in favour of it. He remarks that free collaboration of the sexes would result in our getting rid of much prejudice, and that to find a rational system of education is one of the problems of our day. "*Il faut supprimer la défiance imbécile entre les sexes*," he cries, but he, too, like most male writers, lets himself be carried away by sentiment when he begins to discuss woman.

Why should there be a greater difference between male and female intellect among the upper classes of society than there is among the lower ones? This is a question that no opponent of the woman movement has as yet been able to answer satisfactorily. In those parts of America where co-education has been long enough established this difference has practically ceased to exist; while in Italy and in Spain the gulf is still very wide. There is no possibility of intellectual sympathy between the

average educated Spaniard or Italian and his womenfolk. I recently asked the daughter of a learned Spanish archæologist if she did not admire some picturesque ruins her father was showing me. The girl shook her head, while her father replied, "O no! if a young lady in this country showed an interest in archæology we should think she had gone off her head, she would be locked up." And the daughter who was listening, answered sweetly, "I don't understand anything about these things, but I am very fond of plain sewing."

Those English and American people who scoff at the woman movement — those aristocratic ladies who are using the influence that their high birth and social position ensure to them in order to stem the tide of woman's progress—should go and live for a few months in a provincial town of Spain or Italy, and mix only with the ladies there. The average Spanish lady of the twentieth century is practically less educated than are the children of our board schools. Her mind has never been opened. Her position in the house is that of working housekeeper, or rather of head drudge, in a house where she is the only good servant. She never dresses to receive friends except on stated occasions few and far between. If a stranger calls at the house, she peeps through a little hole above the lock of the front door and asks imperatively, "What do you want?" If the stranger then proposes to hand in a card for her lord and master she opens the door an inch, puts out her hand for the card, and then slams the door while she goes to look for her husband,

who is quite likely to be a well-to-do and respected citizen. If she has grown-up daughters their crass ignorance is painful; there is a dull, sheep-like curiosity in their large dark eyes when they gaze at their father's visitors from their balcony, a look which carries one to the harems of Turkey. On Sunday afternoons the mother, her head wrapped up in a black veil, escorts her fatted daughters for a walk, or rather a husband hunt, in the Alameda. The girls, who never go out alone, are painfully over-dressed on these important expeditions, and look just what they are—slaves on the marriage market awaiting the highest bidder.

"The fate of a middle-class girl in this country, if she does not marry," said a Spanish solicitor to me a few weeks ago, "is extremely painful. There are only two courses open to her: she must either enter a convent, or become a kind of domestic servant." Yet Spain has never, since the days of the Roman Empire, been without her women of energy, learning and genius. There is perhaps no country whose history furnishes us with so glorious a list of illustrious females. And Spain herself is very proud of them too. She has recently put up a fine statue of her famous woman criminologist of the nineteenth century—Concepcion Arenal—in the public gardens of Orense, the town of her birth. What statues of her women of genius has England to show to her visitors? In one Spanish province I found a collection being made towards the raising of a statue of a woman writer who is still alive and in her prime! Yes, the Spaniard's treatment of his women is a

strange contradiction. I predict a grand future for the Spanish woman when once she steps clean out of her harem. It is to her women we must look for the regeneration of Spain.

The best educated men in the Peninsula are, as a rule, to be found in the priesthood. With one of them I discussed the possibilities of the introduction of the system of co-education into Spain. At first his attitude was one of pious horror. "It would never do," he cried. "You might as well propose that our boys and girls should use the same bath! It would lead to terrible immorality." But after some discussion he conceded that a class-room and a swimming-bath are not quite one and the same thing, and that girls and boys might occupy desks side by side under careful supervision, but, how could the teacher's eye follow each child safely to its home? This seemed to my sacerdotal friend an insurmountable difficulty, and he shook his head very decidedly. "The sexes will always be a mutual danger to each other," he said, "a danger which can never be removed." "Your fatalistic Asiatic notions do not astonish me," I cried. "The Moors could not have resided in Spain for eight centuries without leaving some trace of their way of thought behind them." "That is the most cruel thing you could have found to say," replied the priest. "If there is anything that makes us wince it is to be compared with Asiatics." We shook hands and parted.

Another objection to co-education put forward by Turgeon is that, in order to protect the girls from the roughness of the boys, teachers in such schools will

be obliged to make it a hard and fast rule that the boys shall always give in to the girls. This, he says, will be inevitable, and the result will be disastrous. The little girls, accustomed thus from earliest childhood to see their boy companions bend to their will, must acquire bit by bit a false notion of their rôle in life, a notion which will engender selfishness and vanity, a spirit of domination and other grave, moral evils. In fact, M. Turgeon is afraid that the girls would grow up with the very same erroneous notions about the inferiority of men to women, as are held to-day by the men of France as to the inferiority of woman to man! He *dreads* seeing the boys grow up with a feeling that they are intellectually inferior to the girls and that their position is a subordinate one. It is certainly paying a great compliment to the girls to think that they will be able to accomplish so much when once they are given the same educational advantages as their brothers. I do not myself think that, even given the same advantages as man in every respect, woman will ever prove herself man's superior. I cannot believe that it would be for the happiness of any living species that one sex should be fundamentally superior to the other. But in a case of emergency—a great fire, for instance—if the best means of escape from the burning house happened to occur to the brain of a woman, I do not think that even the man who had the greatest contempt for the female sex would hesitate to save his life by adopting it.

Boys educated side by side with girls will doubtless grow up to look on women as their equals. And

the thought of such a result is naturally hateful to all those small-minded, tyrannical, sensual and selfish men who feel that they would be lost without their white slaves, ever ready humbly to minister to their lordly desires. I foresee that many thousands of such men, armed to the teeth with every possible objection, will oppose the introduction of the system of secondary co-education into Great Britain, into France, into Germany, and into Spain and Italy with tooth and nail.

Universal co-education is the door by which the full equality of the sexes will be reached. All those artificial differences between the sexes of which so much has been made, those differences which have been man's main excuse for keeping woman in subjection, will disappear. We shall remember them only as we remember a dream. Men will not lose their respect for women by growing up in close contact and in friendly intercourse with girls of their own social status.

"We needs must love the highest when we see it."

And as a noble-minded Frenchman wrote, towards the close of the year 1906, "*Nous espérons, en effet, que les jeunes gens qui sont attirés vers la femme ne recherchent pas l'assouvissement bestial de leurs instincts, mais plutôt un moyen qui leur permette de laisser déborder une affection qui ne peut rester enfermée. Ce qui le prouve, c'est que ceux qui sont entourés de l'affection des leurs peuvent rester plus facilement continents que les autres, ce qui explique qu'à la campagne, où l'on voit moins de célébataires*

éloignés de leurs famille, on ne connait pas la prostitution."[1] Co-education is likely to be the most efficacious remedy for the curse of Christian society. If Christian men object to try this remedy for the calamities which daily result from this horrible evil, it is for them to find a better one. If we cannot prevent the young men of to-day from seeking their pleasure in the streets, let us at least do something for the children who are growing up in our midst, that they may not go the same way.

It is only in England that Christian men are silent. It is only in England that they dare not denounce the evil growing so rapidly in their midst. It is only in England that men are satisfied with the position their women occupy to-day. Protestant England, the home of the Bible Society, is the only country which persists, in the twentieth century, in drawing a veil over its hideous sore, as it folds its hands in prayer and turns its eyes to Heaven. It is not to be wondered at that English women, brought up in Christian homes, sheltered from sight and sound of everything that is evil, and ignorant of the very world they live in, should thank Heaven that English women are not as other women; but how comes it that English *men* who read and see and hear and travel freely—how is it that these can cry "Peace" when there is no Peace?

M. Turgeon urges that if the same studies, the same examinations, the same interests, are imposed alike upon children of both sexes—the superiority of the husband over the wife and his authority in

[1] Dr Georges Guibert, "Le Mariage," Paris, 1906.

the home will be jeopardised, thanks to which married life will become a sort of two-headed monster, when violent struggles for mastership can only find one solution, that of divorce. Woman, like fire, is in M. Turgeon's opinion a very good servant, but a bad master. She must therefore be kept well under control. "By all means," he cries, "let girls be taught to take care of young infants, let them learn how to administer household medicines, to cut out dresses, to do plain sewing, to cook, and to cultivate flowers." As a servant to man, and as his housekeeper, he does not object to her perfecting herself to the highest possible degree. "But, if co-education were introduced, the boys would have to learn all these things too," he cries! "Fancy the husband arranging the flowers, turning the beef before the fire, and polishing his wife's boots. No. It is clear that each sex has its own particular rôle in life, and that it would be folly to attempt giving the same preparation to both." He then throws himself back upon Montaigne's advice[1] to the mothers of his day, and goes on to point out that the only reason why the French government has permitted co-education in its universities is necessity. To build a university for women would have cost too much money.

I foresee that in the near future the French government will be induced to permit secondary co-education for a similar reason. It is wonderful how many changes a spirit of economy can effect, changes

[1] Montaigne said, "Il ne faut qu'éveiller un peu et réchauffer les facultés qui sont dans les femmes."

which can be brought about by no other earthly means.

It is erroneous to think that all those who are working zealously to better the position of women are bent on forcing young girls through the universities. If our High Schools seem to have a leaning that way it is only a passing phase, and as more and more ways of earning their living are thrown open to girls, there will be less and less unthinking desire to cull university honours. It is foolish to be frightened at the swing of the pendulum. Neither higher education nor co-education will ever rob the normal woman of her sexual traits.

When co-education has been universally adopted for a quarter of a century new books will have to be written on the psychology of woman, and on the feminine temperament. Once the mechanical division of training and labour between the sexes has been done away with, the organic difference, as H. Lange has so well put it, will have a chance of being perfected. "It is only of late," says that writer, "that man's judgment has been criticised by woman, and he, surprised and indignant, has retorted by showing her his contempt. Give each sex full room to unfold its capabilities in every possible direction, and then, and then only, shall we see wherein the true difference lies."[1]

In these days when so many English families consist of one only child, a boy or a girl as the case may be, co-education will help in a great

[1] Helene Lange, "Intellectuelle Grenzlinien zwischen Mann und Frau." Berlin.

measure to make up for the loss resulting from the absence of brothers and sisters. Not only in their childhood will co-education benefit these children, but all through their after-life they will feel its good effects. The boy who has no sisters will have, as he grows into manhood, a number of women friends of his own rank in life, and the girl who has no brothers, as she grows into womanhood, will have men friends, whose goodwill and sympathy will be invaluable, should she have to go forth into the battle of life alone and unprotected.

Every woman who, breaking through the barriers of custom and prejudice that hedge her in on all sides into a newer and fuller life of individual development and independence, proves, by her conscientious fulfilment of the duties the calling she has chosen entails upon her, that the world she lives in is the better for the effort she has made and the success she has achieved—is helping on the woman movement, by the courage she inspires in the breasts of her weaker sisters and by the cheering example she affords them. Almost every book on the subject cites numbers of such women. I do not know a country or an age that has been without them. Their names alone would fill a volume. One by one her disabilities, civil and political, are falling before woman as she advances more and more boldly to take her place beside man, not as his rival, but as his friend and trusted comrade in the battle that both have to fight shoulder to shoulder. Until now humanity has advanced with halting gait and uncertain step along the path of civilization and

improvement. Woman in her helplessness born of ignorance, has constantly checked the advance of man, but now that her ignorance is being changed into knowledge and her helplessness into strong courage and the power of self-control, the time is near when of her own freewill, and with an enlightened understanding, she too will move forward, keeping pace with man; and the resources of progress will be doubled.

END

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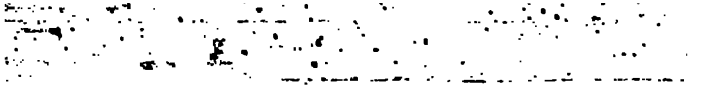

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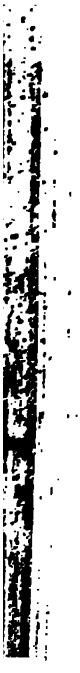
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